

SOUTHEAST RAIL TREK p. 64

// CALIFORNIA LUMBER LINE p. 36

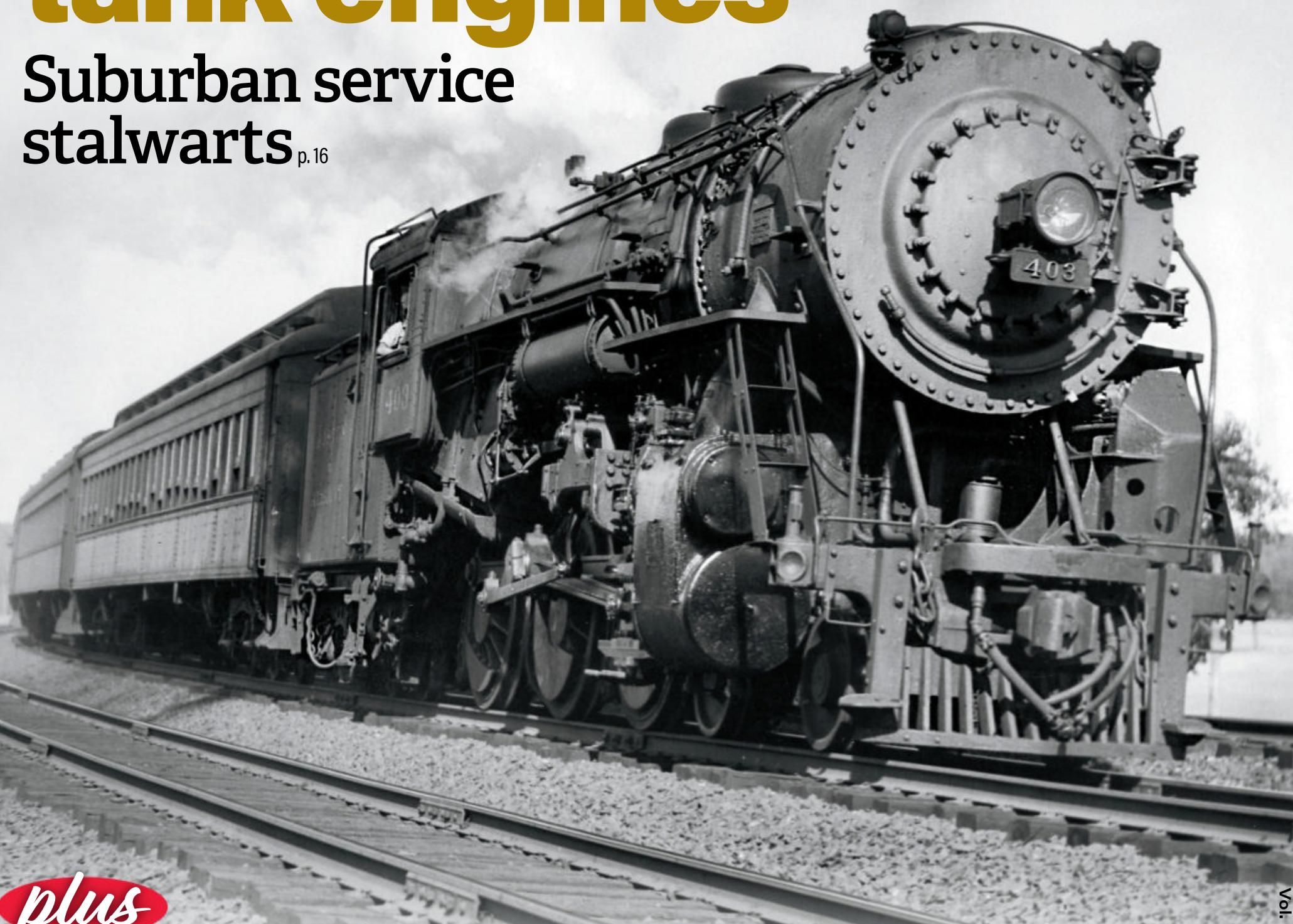
Classic Trains®

SPRING 2022

THE GOLDEN YEARS OF RAILROADING

Mainline tank engines

Suburban service
stalwarts p. 16



plus

Learning a lost
trade on the
Canadian Pacific p. 24

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chase for the
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Walking the
Erie main in
New Jersey p. 56



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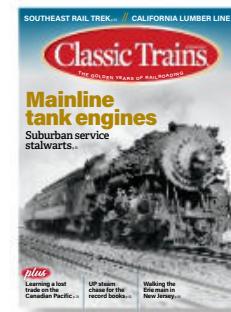
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THE GOLDEN YEARS OF RAILROADS

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Trains

This Issue



On our cover
Boston & Albany No. 403
rolls a Boston-to-Fram-
ingham train through
Weston Park in the early
1940s. H. W. Pontin

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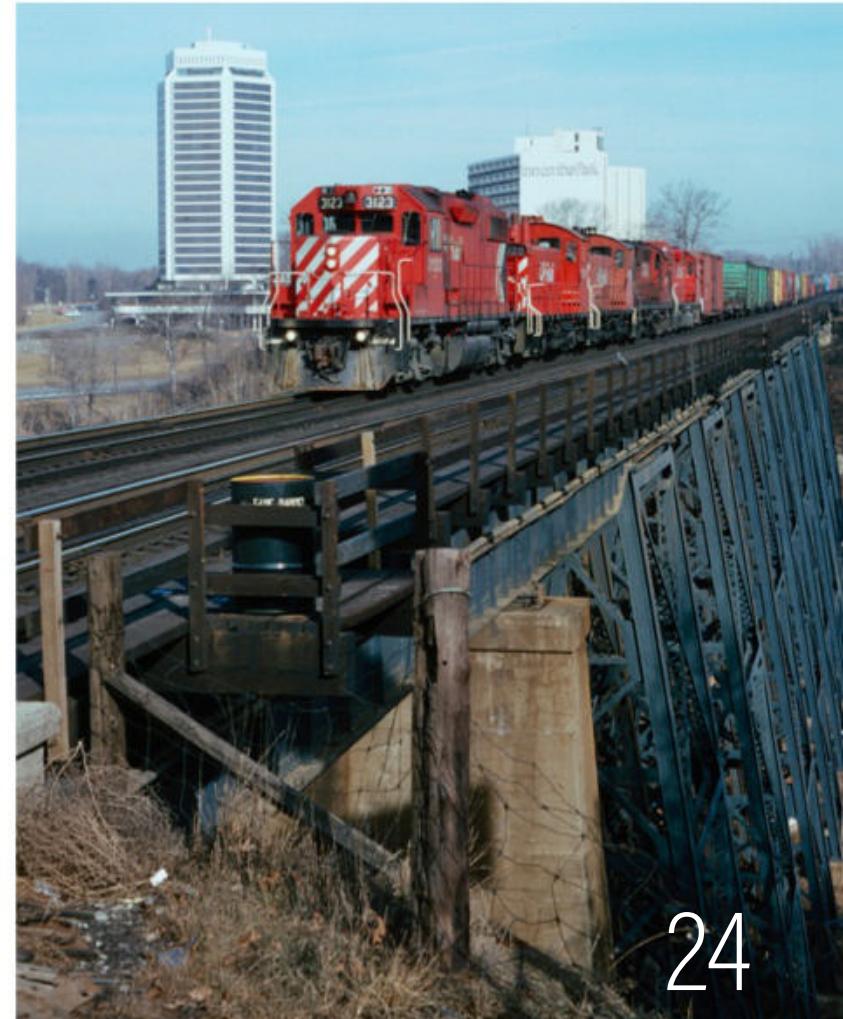
JERRY A. PINKEPANK

Olympian Hiawatha's second section, hurrying express reefers west, takes coal and water

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BOB JOHNSTON

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I Like Trains, too

I know why you're here. That's why I'm here.

More than 40 years ago, Kalmbach produced a softcover collection of the best stories from TRAINS' first decades. It was called "I Like Trains." The table of contents reads like a who's who of railroad authors: Kalmbach, Kimball, Moedinger, Abbey, Morgan, and others. My copy is well-worn and much treasured, even more now because of the seat I occupy. In some ways, the magazine you are holding is the successor to "I Like Trains." Both look back fondly on railroading's past and both owe a great deal to TRAINS' own fantastic legacy.

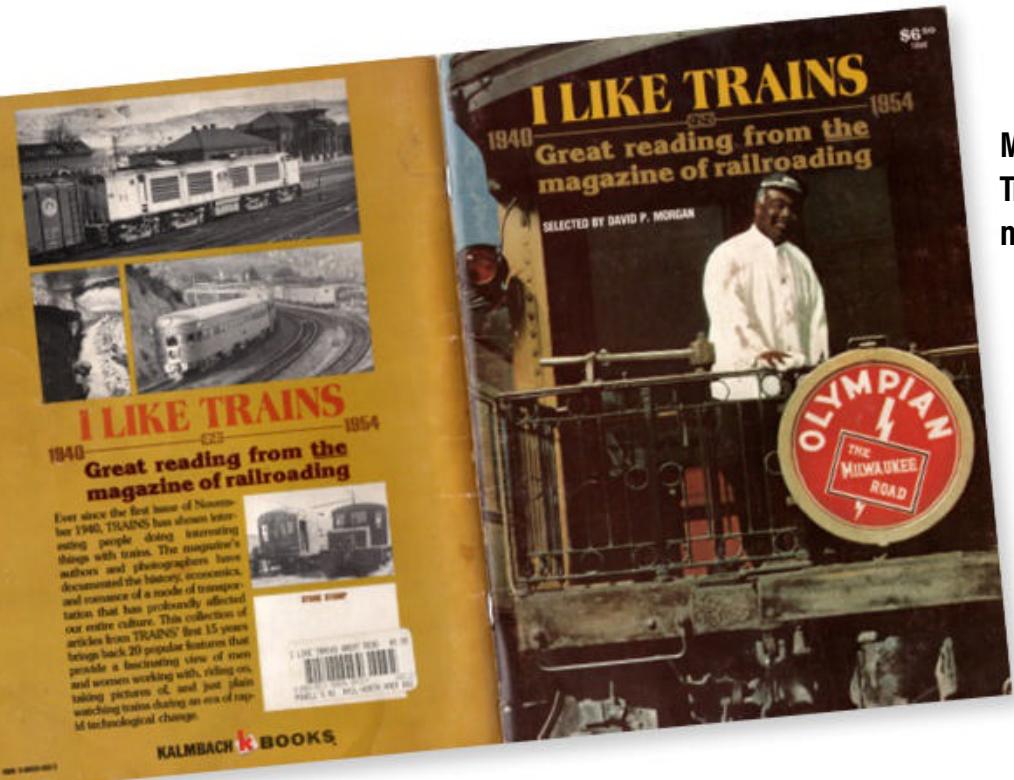
After more than nine years with TRAINS, I look forward to pulling the throttle full time on CLASSIC TRAINS. Railroading has changed drastically in just my time with TRAINS, and even more so in the three decades I've been a railfan. What changes will come in the next decade? Thankfully, predicting that is not my concern anymore. I'm most happy looking through square-mount slides or examining an old Official Guide, two tasks that are central to CLASSIC TRAINS' workflow.

You're likely to see some change coming up in the pages of CLASSIC TRAINS, too: new authors, new photographers, and new topics. I may even challenge your concept of what is classic now. (This is the year where Conrail has been gone as long as it existed.) Please let me know, via email or letter, what you want to see in CLASSIC TRAINS. I already have a lot of great ideas for what I want to share with you, and I hope that you'll enjoy those topics as much as I do.

Just remember, I like trains, too.



EDITOR



My own copy of "I Like Trains" is well worn and much treasured.



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A potpourri of railroad history, then and now

WE MISS ...
Detroit railroads moving Detroit steel.
George Cheatwood, Zach Marlow collection

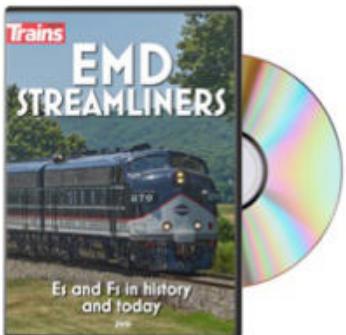
HeadEnd



Steam returns to Western Maryland

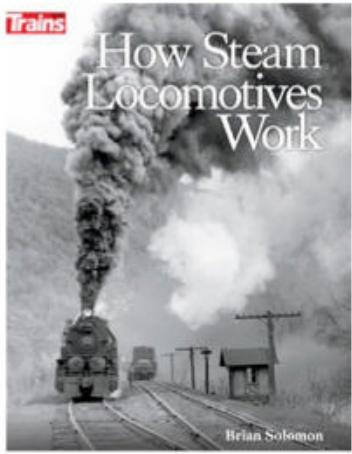
Western Maryland Scenic Railroad debuted recently restored former Chesapeake & Ohio 2-6-6-2 No. 1309 on Polar Express excursions in December. The Mallet, based in Cumberland, Md., is the last steam locomotive Baldwin built for domestic service. Walter Scriptunas II

New from Kalmbach



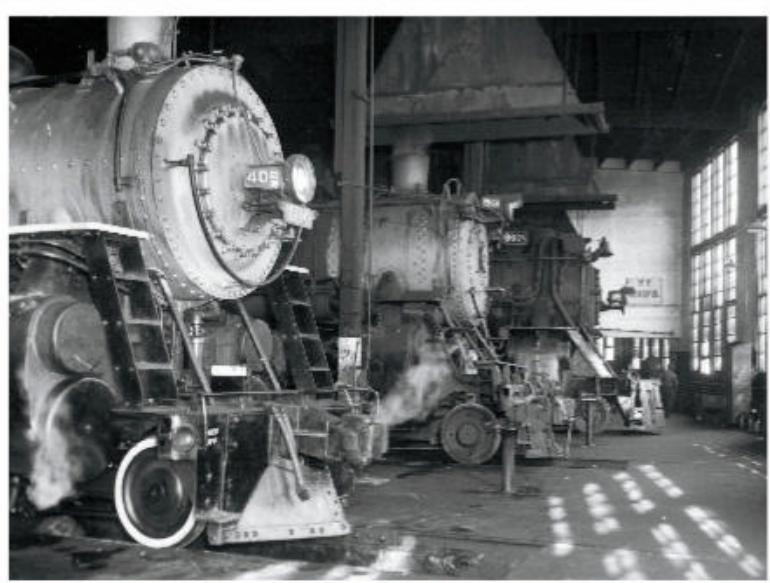
EMD STREAMLINERS

Don't miss this exclusive overview of the history of EMD Streamliners and why they still are fan favorites. Plus, take a comprehensive look at exclusive footage of streamliners operating today.



HOW STEAM LOCOMOTIVES WORK

Follow along with accomplished railway author Brian Solomon as he guides you through the various components and evolution of steam locomotives. You'll learn how locomotives were designed, how they work, their strengths and weaknesses, how they evolved, and more!



Kansas (City) Pacifics

Pacifcics from three railroads line up in Kansas City Terminal's roundhouse on Feb. 16, 1949. Left to right are Missouri-Kansas-Texas No. 406; Chicago, Burlington & Quincy No. 2964; and Missouri Pacific No. 6608. The Katy locomotive had just arrived from bringing the *Katy Flyer* into town. Don Smith

Reviews

Amtrak America's Railroad

By Geoffrey H. Doughty, Jeffrey T. Darbee, and Eugene E. Harmon. Indiana University Press, 238 pages. \$40.

This hardcover volume records the many trials of keeping America's railroad passenger service on track, and there were and still remain many. The chapters offer coverage of "What We Had,"

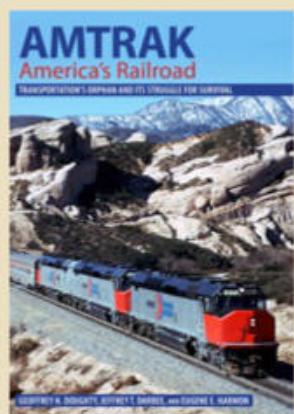
"Creating a New National Network,"

"Where Do We Go From Here?" and

"The Road to the Future."

The authors have dug deep to record input from many railroad and governmental sources to tell this history.

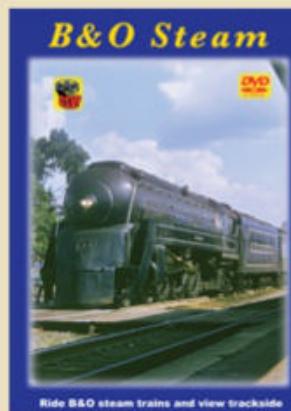
This is not a typical railfan book with equipment photos and action shots. But for those who want to get into the nuts and bolts of Amtrak's creation and ongoing problems and solutions, I know of no better source. — *Don Heimburger*



B&O Steam

Greg Scholl Video Productions, DVD, 77 minutes. \$39.95.

As the cover of the DVD states, you'll relive the glory years on the Baltimore & Ohio steam operations in Ohio, Indiana, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania. A wide area of the B&O is covered during the steam era including Cincinnati to North Vernon, Ind.; Cincinnati to Pittsburgh via Columbus; and around Wheeling, W.Va. Also shown are scenes at Cincinnati Union Terminal, including the roundhouse, the famous *Cincinnatian*, steam action, and even a ride in the cab of a P-7 4-6-2 with cameraman Warren Scholl at the throttle. The DVD features through freight and passenger trains, switching with steam, yards and facilities — a whole potpourri of B&O action. As with all dated footage, you expect some flaws, but more than likely you'll grab onto each segment of this color film to see some really neat B&O steam locomotives, freight, and passenger trains and terminal facilities. — *Don Heimburger*

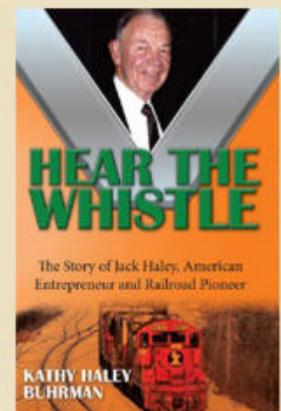


Hear the Whistle: The Story of Jack Haley, American Entrepreneur and Railroad Pioneer

By Kathy Haley Buhrman. Steinauer Publishing, 252 pages. \$19.95.

"Hear the Whistle" is Jack Haley's biography, written by his daughter. It primarily covers his career in the rail industry. His first short line in Iowa and Minnesota focused on the revenue side — marketing and sales — rather than trying to reduce costs by trimming staff and deferring maintenance. The book's most interesting portion was acquisition of the Illinois Central Iowa Division main line reborn as the Chicago Central & Pacific. Regrettably, the railroad was forced into bankruptcy and he was replaced as management. I was impressed by how, with all of the problems he experienced, he was able to maintain equilibrium in his life. Tellingly, as his tombstone says: "He Got the Big Picture."

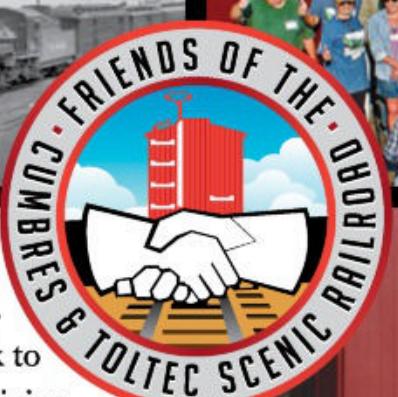
— *Clark Johnson*



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LET'S KEEP THE LEGEND ROLLING.



Alco's C415 demonstrator works for Pennsylvania Railroad at Conway Yard near Pittsburgh in October 1966. The Pennsy must not have liked what it saw, because it didn't purchase any of the model, even though it was a regular Alco customer. Brian Schmidt collection

Diesels that didn't: Alco C415

Customization was no cure for this Alco's anemic sales

Alco C415 failure was not what the famed locomotive maker had in mind in the 1960s. At the time, Alco saw a need to revamp its switcher offerings and came up with the offset center-cab configuration C415, which launched as a demonstrator in 1966. The arrangement separated the prime mover from the radiator on different ends, causing the need for more wiring and piping and a longer driveshaft, compared with competing (and prior) models.

Alco marketed the C415 as a jack-of-all-trades unit, being equally capable of handling branch line, heavy transfer, yard switching, or mainline duties. It was offered with various options to suit each job.

The C415 was offered with three truck options: two versions of the common AAR Type-B truck and Alco's own distinctive "Hi-Ad" truck, better known for its use on the C430 and, in a six-wheel configuration, C630 and C636. The Hi-Ad trucks, with their prominent springs, were intended to improve adhesion compared with previous designs.

Most notably, the C415 could be built with one of three cab configurations: low at 14 feet 6 inches; midheight at 15 feet 2 inches; or high at 16 feet 4 inches. The high cab was promoted as best visibility for switching and the low cab was intended for industrial customers with restricted clearances.

To support use as a road locomotive, the model was offered with an optional 1,900-gallon fuel tank, almost double in size from the standard 1,000-gallon tank.

Rock Island had 10 with midheight cabs and Type-B trucks that tended to stay around the Chicago area. Southern Pacific also had 10 with high cabs and Type-B trucks, which worked around Southern California. Finally, Spokane, Portland & Seattle ordered two with midheight cabs and Hi-Ad trucks.

Pittsburgh-area steel road Monongahela Connecting ordered the only unit with a low cab. Coincidentally, both the "MonCon" and Northwest logging road Columbia & Cowlitz numbered their single units 701. A single unit was also sold to Chehalis Western with a high cab and Hi-Ad trucks.

In the end, Alco sold just 26 C415s before ending all diesel locomotive production in 1969. That compares poorly with EMD's SW1500, which was introduced the same year, and sold more than 808 units through 1974. That disparity qualifies the C415 for the "diesel that didn't" moniker.

CLC 701, CWWR 684, MCRR 701, RI 415-424, SP 2400-2409, SPS 100-101; additionally, Hamersley Iron in Australia purchased the original demonstrator, renumbering it 1000.
— Brian M. Schmidt

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MILEPOSTS

A blog from Classic Trains columnist Kevin P. Keefe

Blog

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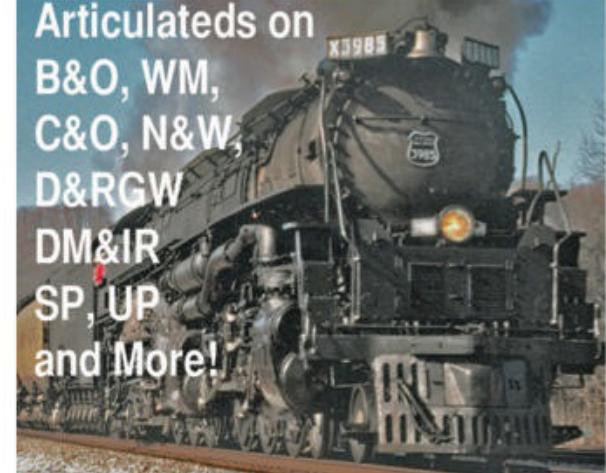
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GG1 top shot

Thank you for another great issue of CLASSIC TRAINS. I had to send you this photo of Amtrak GG1 4872 being serviced at Sunnyside Yard in New York City in 1981. It is the same year and the same motor in Rob McGonigal's photo "Sunrise at South Amboy." I had the good fortune to visit New York in 1981 and used some of that time to see these big locomotives.

— Henrik Åkesson, Sweden

Amtrak GG1 motor 4872 rests at Sunnyside Yard in Queens, N.Y. It wears solid black paint acquired from Penn Central. Henrik Åkesson

R.S.M. farewell

The Winter issue is bittersweet. I want to thank Robert McGonigal for his two-decade commitment to this magazine and all of the wonderful content that he has brought to us, the readers.

I also want to thank Chris Burger for his "Best of Everything" series. I have never been so deep inside the working of a railroad. His insight and pleasant manner obviously worked well on the C&NW and has bled over to the many pages he has written for CLASSIC TRAINS.

The rest of the issue was an absolute pleasure to read. Also a warm welcome to Brian Schmidt taking the reins; I look forward to the future he brings. Keep on delivering the best content from the Golden Years of Railroading.

Richard H. Jordan III, Rochester, N.Y.

I want to thank you [Rob McGonigal] for your years of editorial leadership. You and your team always produced a quality product, one that I enjoyed receiving and reading.

You've left Brian a tough task, that's for certain! All the best for the future.

Andy Evridge, Parma, Ohio

One must wonder if the retiring editor was intentionally holding the photo of Reading Terminal for this particular issue as his "swan song." Even better, I might wonder how many times Mr. McGonigal rode the 9.2 miles from the platforms at 12th and Market streets to and from his

boyhood home in Elkins Park, savoring an ice cream cone from Bassett's in the Reading Terminal Market as he enjoyed the open-window Reading green M.U. cars along the way.

Larry Eastwood, Huntingdon Valley, Pa.

Congratulations on your upcoming retirement, Mr. McGonigal! You've had a great 22-year run at CLASSIC TRAINS and the mag was superb with every issue.

Wayne Antoniazzi, Henrico, N.J.

Two photographers enjoyed

Even by the exceptionally high standards of CLASSIC TRAINS, the article "Two Photographers You Should Know" is simply superb. I hope a book of photographs by George Corey and Stanwood Bolton will be published in the near future.

Michael Wright

Thank you for publishing Tony Koester's article on George Corey and Stanwood Bolton. Years ago I patronized Rail Photo Service. When H. W. "Jack" Pontin liquidated the business, he offered the company's negatives for sale to customers. I was fortunate to acquire about 30 negatives from RPS with images of the Jersey Central, Lehigh Valley, Lackawanna, and Virginian. Each negative is housed in a 3½-by-6½-inch envelope with railroad, engine number, location, date, and the photographer's name. Several of the envelopes are adorned with the name S. K. Bolton Jr. I never knew

Mr. Bolton, but now thanks to CLASSIC TRAINS I have made his acquaintance.

One of my all-time favorite photos was taken by Mr. Bolton in Bangor, Pa., of Lackawanna 2-8-2 1253 hauling covered hoppers through town. It displays great composition and atmosphere.

Thank you again for producing such a fine magazine.

Walter A. Appel, Lynnwood, Wash.

'Best of Everything' no more

I realized Chris Burger's "The Best of Everything" would not go on forever, but I was surprised that it was ending with Winter 2021. It was a well-done series, granting the reader a peek at the life of a railroad manager on the road. His nomadic experiences were not for everyone, but no matter where, he made temporary and permanent changes for the good.

I would go as far as to say he was a "Mr. Fixit," much in the 20th century ways of the legendary John W. Barriger III in his service with the Monon, Pittsburgh & Lake Erie, Missouri-Kansas-Texas, and Boston & Maine.

Ted Shady, Cape Cod, Mass.

Chatham family connection

Rich Luckin's memories of the NYC Harlem Division out of Chatham stirred up memories of my own, when as a young lad I watched those trains with 4-6-2s on the head end come and go. I often was at the depot and was there in 1948 when my grandfather, Joe Gangloff,

retired as baggagemaster at the age of 80.
Art Johnson, Rutland, Vt.

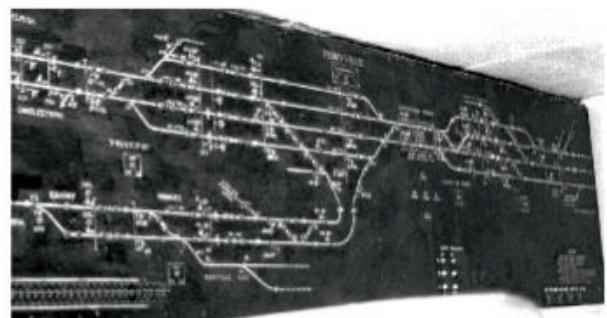
A meet at Perryville Tower

I read with interest "Bad Day for a B&O Hotshot" and then noticed Al Walton's name as the author.

I met Al at Perryville Tower in Maryland in May 1978, while I was a 20-year-old undergrad at Towson State University. I decided to write a paper on Perryville Tower for my Principles of Transportation class and received permission to visit the tower through the superintendent in Baltimore.

When I arrived, Al introduced himself as the regular 7:30 a.m.-to-3:30 p.m. operator and gave me a tour. He explained the work done there, what the equipment was, and how it worked. Al permitted me to observe and take some photos for a couple hours. He later reviewed my paper.

While I was there, a southbound freight behind two former Pennsylvania E44 electrics from Enola on the Port Road approached the interlocking. When authorized, Al set the switches and signals for the train to enter the main line over the two-track Susquehanna River Bridge. As the motors eased their way around the sharp curve of the wye, they began slipping. Apparently the servicing crew at Enola neglected to refill the sand. Slowly, the train crept out on the main line. Al was instantly concerned the train was going to stall and delay southbound Amtrak trains. He bounced between the CTC console and the window, until the train got up to speed.

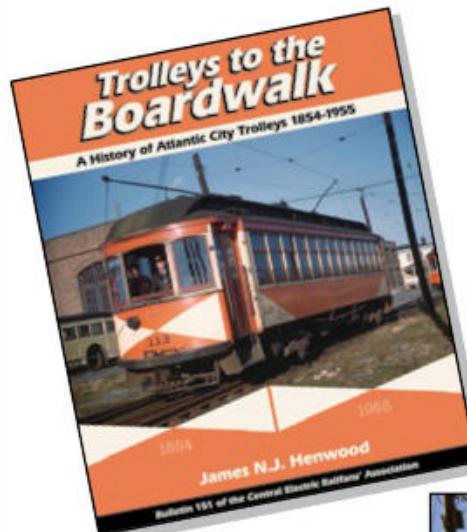


Photos show the interior of Perryville Tower, including author Al Walton at right. Tim Gardner

Trolleys to the Boardwalk

A History of Atlantic City Trolleys 1854-1955

By James N. J. Henwood



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PHOTOGRAPH BY DONALD W. FURLER

I've enclosed some photos from that day. One shows the operators at the CTC console; Al is the younger man with the long hair and beard. The other shows the model board. The B&O connection and derail Al referred to in his article is shown as a dashed line to the right of the word "Minnick" labeled "B.&O. R.R. Conn."

Tim Gardner, Marlborough, Mass.

Company-pass perks

I enjoyed John Harmon's story about his company-pass riding. When I worked as a management trainee for Penn Central in 1968 and '69, I also had a pass good on all trains.

In early 1969, I was assigned to a special project in New York with several other trainees. We worked out of 466 Lexington Ave., and had a company rate at the Commodore Hotel (now the Grand Hyatt) next to Grand Central Terminal. There were plenty of good restaurants in New York, but our restaurant of choice was the twin-unit diner from the *Century* that still ran on 61 to Chicago.

The car opened at 6 p.m., departure was 6:30, and we enjoyed martinis and steaks on the beautiful ride up the Hudson to Harmon. There we detrained and rode the local back to the city.

Once in a while, if the diner was busy or service was slow, we'd end up in Peekskill or Poughkeepsie, which made it a bit harder to get home.

Several months later, I was working on another special project in Philadelphia. We had an even better routine. The 5 p.m. *Clock* from Philly to New York carried one of the parlor cars off the *Empire State Express*. The 37-minute run to Trenton was time enough for a martini. At Trenton, we crossed over to the west-bound platform, and 15 minutes later the *Broadway Limited* came through on its way to Chicago. We would board the diner and eat our steaks on the ride to Paoli. If things were slow, we ended up in Lancaster, but there was frequent service back to Philadelphia.

Victor Hand, Bar Harbor, Maine

Milwaukee motor preserved

Regarding the excellent "Car Stop" feature on Milwaukee, I am pleased to report that steeple-cab L-4 pictured has been preserved at the Illinois Railway Museum where it occasionally works switching and pulling demonstration freight trains.

Paul Schneble, Wauwatosa, Wis.

During the great 1977 Buffalo blizzard, gondolas are loaded with snow for shipment ... elsewhere. Geoff Hubbs



Buffalo's Blizzard of '77 remembered

I was working for the Northeastern Region of Conrail in the Communications & Signal Department and one of many who headed to Buffalo in January 1977. We only got as far as Rochester as the New York State Thruway was closed, so we stayed in a nice Marriott. We thought we might be there for days, but I think the next day the authorities let us go west.

We had a state-police-escorted caravan, including an ambulance and a few food trucks, all the time wondering what we would find once we got to Buffalo. Driving in Buffalo wasn't bad as most streets were plowed. But the locals were happy being snowed in and didn't shovel their cars out.

We only found later that Conrail President Dick Spence and others were on light engines that got stuck in drifts in Batavia and had to get rescued. Our main goals were to keep the Frontier Yard hump operating and clearing mainline switches. We sent busloads of down-on-their-luck locals to shovel out siding switches and control points. There were hundreds of rental backhoes and loaders that never got used. The money spent was phenomenal.

I had heard about snow trains but didn't believe it to be true. Sure enough, with nowhere left to pile snow, crews filled empty gondolas and ran them south until it melted.

After two weeks, rumors spread that Spence and others went back to Philadelphia, so we just had to wait for each echelon to go home. I enjoyed a nice warm ride on an Amtrak *Empire Service Turbo* back to Albany.

Geoff Hubbs, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Author Fred Furminger mentioned the cleanup of the storm from the yards and properties.

Fresh out of the Navy in 1969, my uncle, a long-time New York Central machinist, got me a job as an electrician on Penn Central at the Harmon Shops in Croton-on-Hudson.

I remember news of the massive storm in the Buffalo area, and of how Conrail cleaned up the mess. It was talked about over and over that the railroad brought in every gondola and dump car and so forth that could carry snow, filled them up, drove south until the contents were melted, returned to Buffalo, and repeated this until the yards and other facilities were cleared.

It was an ingenious solution to a difficult situation because of the problem with Lake Erie. We tried to do that on the Hudson Division that year but were stopped due to environmental considerations.

Tony Merante, Cold Spring, N.Y.

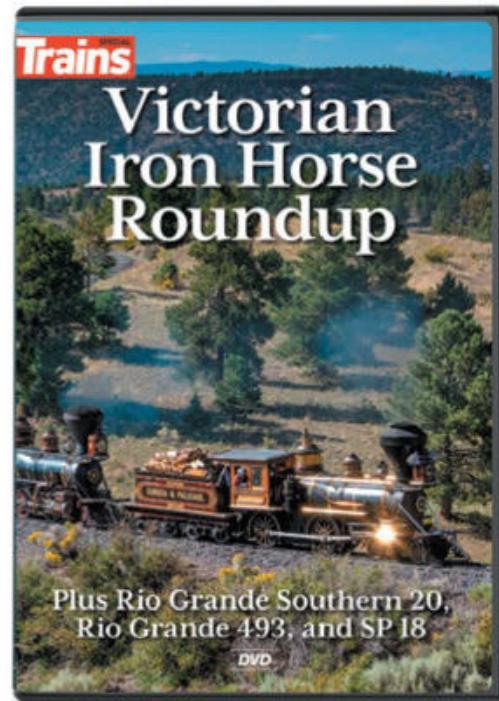
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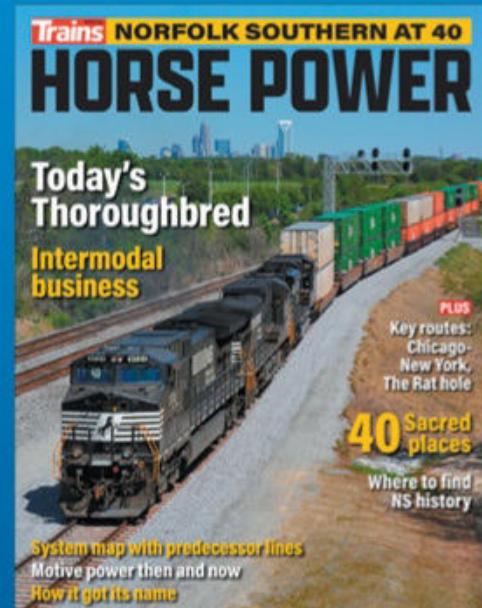
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A fan for life?

A man holds a young child on the platform at Joliet Union Station as Santa Fe GP20 No. 1100 pounds through Joliet, Ill., in the 1960s. Note here the three consecutively numbered units, 1100-1101-1102, exemplary of the power typical on the Santa Fe east of Kansas City in this era due to a requirement for Automatic Train Stop-equipped power. Joliet Union Station and UD Tower, partially visible at right, have been rail-fan hangouts for generations. Will this experience make the young one a railfan for life? J. David Ingles, Brian Schmidt collection



A champion of word and photo

Don Sims captured the essence of the West

Railroad photography came of age as a genre — maybe even an art form — with the November 1955 issue of TRAINS magazine. Therein, Editor David P. Morgan showcased the work of a dozen photographers, most of whom would go on to become legends in the field. It was one of the first times that photographs of trains were celebrated for their own sake. Specific subject matter was irrelevant.

The names in those pages likely are familiar: Philip R. Hastings, Richard Steinheimer, Wallace W. Abbey, Jim Shaughnessy, William D. Middleton, Robert Hale . . . a Mount Rushmore of railroad photography. Alas, all save one — the great J. Parker Lamb — have left us. The most recent loss came December 2021 with the passing at age 93 of Donald Sims, a Californian and an incredibly prolific chronicler of Western railroading.

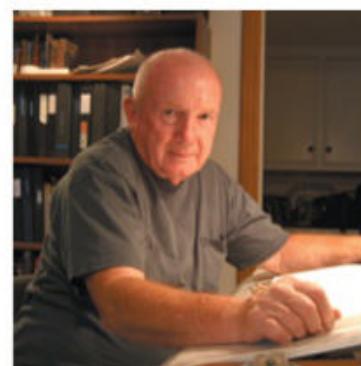
I never met Sims, but I knew his name from my very first issue of TRAINS, August 1965. It included his news photo of EMD SD40 demonstrators. This little snapshot, taken at Southern Pacific's Taylor Yard in Los Angeles, barely hinted at his immense talent as both a photographer and a writer.

By that time, Don Sims was a fixture in the magazine, known for his perceptive work at Cajon and Tehachapi, and in the Sierra Nevada and all around his beloved L.A. There would be much more to come.

It occurred to me that Sims' work must have inspired a lot of other photographers. I was right. Several of them were more than happy to explain his influence.

One of them was my good friend David Lustig, veteran California-based railroad journalist. He and Don were good friends, and Lustig remembers a guy who went about his work quietly, but with plenty of determination.

"Normally, Don wasn't overly chatty,



Don Sims in his studio.

David Lustig



A Southern Pacific cab-forward takes on water at Saugus, Calif., in 1954. Don Sims

but given the right circumstances he could really open up," Lustig recalls. "More than once I was with him and Steinheimer when we would meet at a coffee shop in Mojave.

Within minutes, the two of them were recalling many of their adventures over the years, laughing at their missteps and enjoying the memories. Through thick and thin, railroading was the glue that kept their friendship fresh over the many decades."

You didn't have to know Sims personally to be deeply influenced by him. David Styffe, the accomplished photographer, editor, and graphic designer, credits Sims and Steinheimer with inspiring him to get involved in the hobby.

"My initial exposure to Don's photography was in the book 'Western Trains' (Golden West Books, 1965), which he coauthored with Steinheimer," Styffe

says. "I saw that book in our local public library and checked it out. After I returned it, I checked it out again . . . and then again. Soon the only name on that library slip was mine."

It wasn't just Sims' photography that got everyone's attention. His writing could be equally powerful. Ask Ted Benson, who describes Sims as a mentor for at least two generations of railroad photojournalists. Benson's own double-threat status as an author as well as photographer can be traced in part to Sims.

"While his photographs always got my attention, his words were what affected me most," Benson says. "You got the impression Don didn't need something as obvious as color film — his prose was a rich palette of hues and nuance. His description, say, of the rainbow of passenger car paint schemes at Portland Union Station in a two-part feature on the Spokane, Portland & Seattle told the story better than any Kodachrome. His breathtaking two-parter documenting the railroads of Los Angeles in 1959

continues to inspire me. No one could capture the sense of place like Sims."

That same L.A. story made a similar impression on Lustig. "He was such a great storyteller who loved to write about the ever-changing world of railroading. Take that two-part piece in 1959 on Los Angeles. Not only did he tell us where everything was, he had the ability to explain to his readers how and why it worked."

Sims' association with Steinheimer shouldn't be underestimated. The pair were great friends and collaborators, and while "Stein" cultivated a wider reputation, his friendship with Sims was essential in his growth as a photographer. Some of this becomes clear in Benson's 1999 book "Done Honest & True," an affectionate paean to Steinheimer.

"Though only one year older than Stein, Sims brought a strong base of street smarts and common sense that

never failed to amaze the wunderkind from Glendale," Benson said. "Stein's tales of the pair's various automotive mishaps while exploring the

Far West are worth the price of admission. Stein admitted that while he was the dreamer, 'reaching for the stars and stumbling over wheelbarrows,' Sims was the practical one, always finding ways to overcome the odds in favor of good photographs."

Good photographs. Lord knows Don Sims created plenty of them. One of the things I've long admired about the man is that he so successfully bridged that 1950s transition from the lost world of steam to the new-era diesels, something he had in common with other notables such as Shaughnessy and Lamb. Rather than sulk about what was lost — as many of his generation did — he kept at it. We can be glad he did. ■

KEVIN P. KEEFE joined the TRAINS staff in 1987, became editor in 1992, and retired in 2016 as Kalmbach Media's vice president, editorial. His biweekly blog "Mileposts" is at *Trains.com*.



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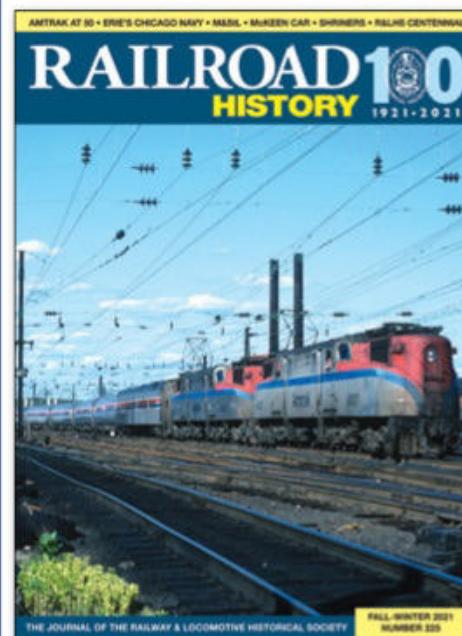
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COVER STORY

Suburban



stalwarts

Serving congested urban terminals, commuter railroads have long resorted to creative ways of improving capacity and efficiency. Most visible to riders, high-density coaches offer little in the way of comfort but maximize each train's passenger count while keeping station platform and storage-yard requirements manageable.

In the era before the operation of true "push-pull" trains, bidirectional motive power made time-sensitive operations more efficient at stub-ended urban terminals and hinterland endpoints. The locomotive simply ran around its train to reverse direction, dispensing with the need for turntables or wyes. The first diesel road-switcher models — notably, Alco's RS-1, -2, and -3; and Electro-Motive

Division's GP7 and 9 — were tailor-made for such assignments. The need for that same bidirectional convenience existed in the steam era, of course, but conventional tender-equipped steam locomotives typically weren't designed to do much main-line running in reverse.

Enter the tank engine, the steam-era operational equivalent of a diesel road switcher, and a concept embraced, to

Canadian National class X-10-a 4-6-4T No. 49 works in suburban service on Montreal's West Island in the late 1930s or 1940s. This view shows the tank engines' inherent versatility. James A. Brown collection



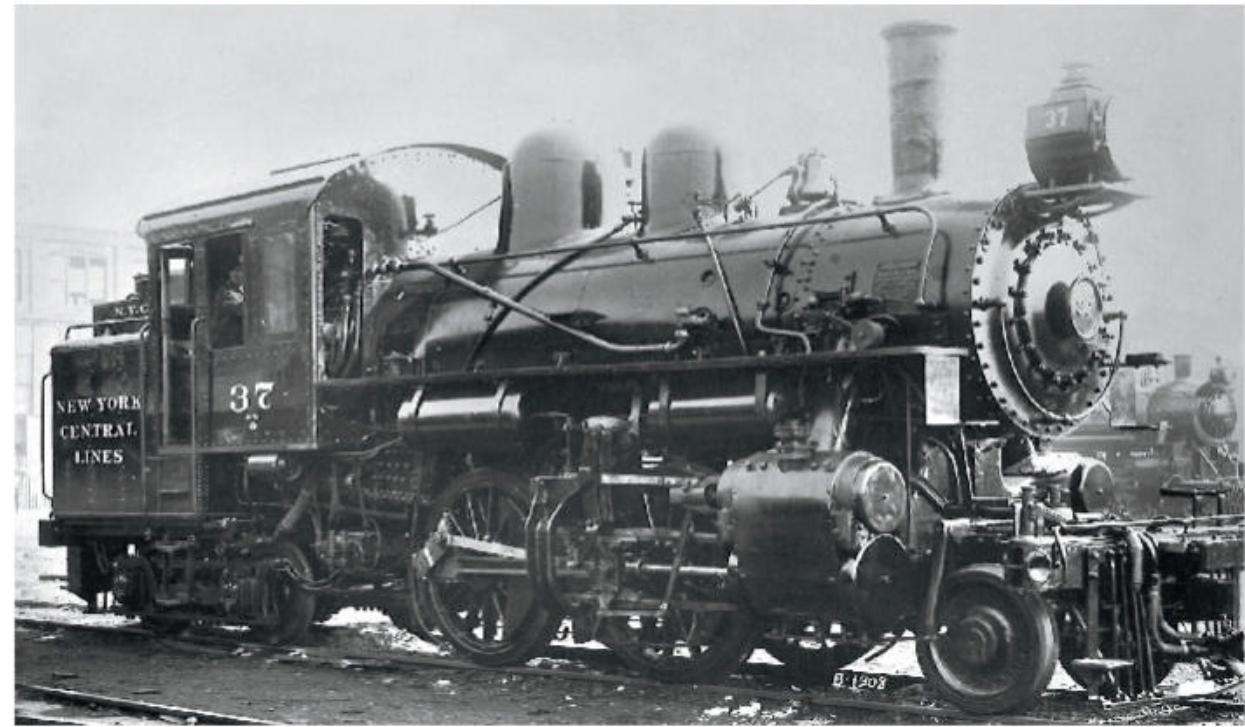
varying degrees, by commuter railroads in several of North America's largest cities.

Tank engines were especially popular in Great Britain and parts of Europe, where short routes and congested terminals abounded. The first British examples were in service by 1850, and within two decades were being produced in large numbers for switching duties as well as mainline use. In the 1930s, close to 40 percent of all steam locomotives owned by the four major British railway groups were tank engines, and new examples were still being built after the British Railways amalgamation of 1948 – notably, the Standard Class 4 2-6-4T locomotive, with 155 built during 1951-56.

Although their appearance varied, tank engines are perhaps best defined as combining all the usual steam-locomotive requirements — cab, firebox, boiler, fuel and, water — on a single rigid frame, dispensing with the need for a separate tender.

Form followed function, with most suburban tank engines sharing a squat profile providing adequate visibility from the cab when traveling in either direction, with pilots on both ends for good measure. The "tank" designation (indicated with a "T" appended to the wheel arrangement) arose from the storage of water, whether in a saddle tank wrapped over the upper boiler; in boxy side tanks on both sides of the boiler; or in a squared tank behind the cab integral with the coal bunker.

On-board provision for water and coal was obviously limited but enough for the short range demanded in commuter or



New York Central's second group of Alco 2-4-4Ts were Nos. 37-41. They later carried Nos. 1911-1915 and were retired in 1927 when the Yonkers branch was electrified. Roy W. Carlson

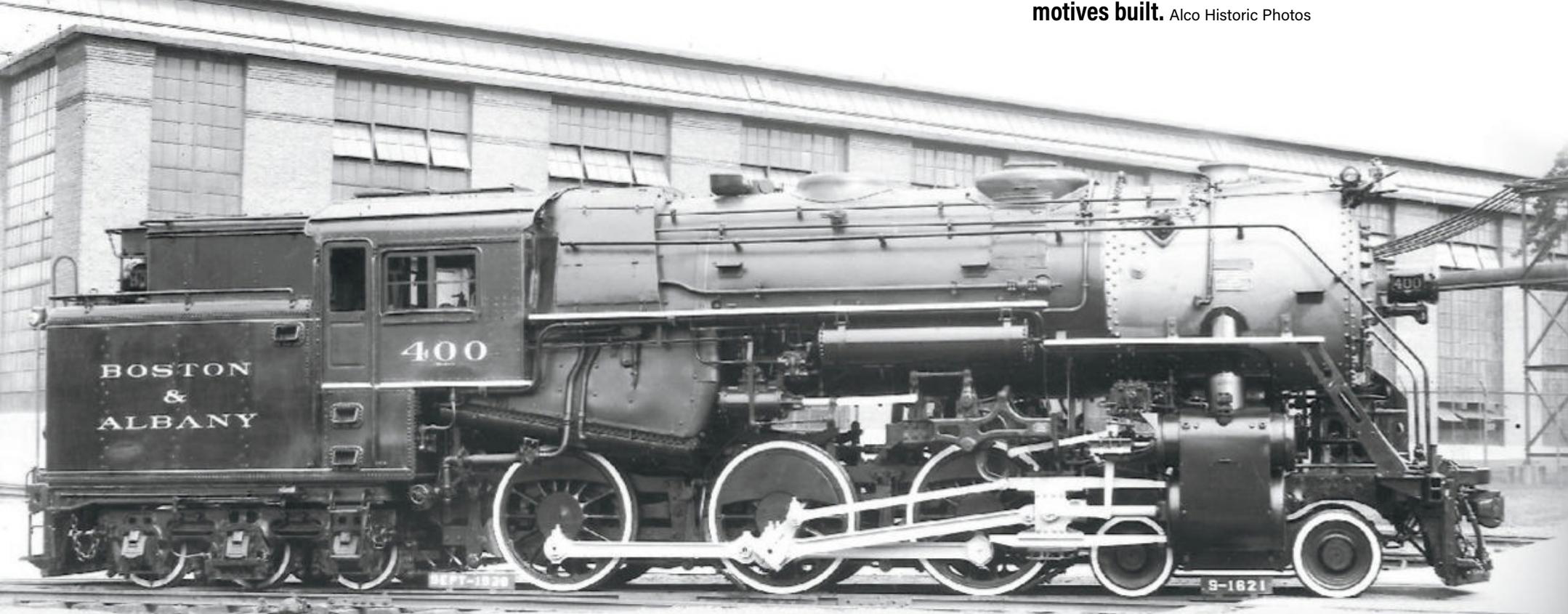
yard service. Five or six tons of coal was at the high end for most tank engines' bunkers, compared with up to 10 tons for a tender-equipped locomotive of comparable specifications. On the plus side, the concentration of weight on tank-engine drivers achieved by dispensing with a tender enhanced these typically small locomotives' adhesion and tractive effort.

The first tank engines in North American commuter service were 0-4-4T Forney types. These small locomotives, introduced by Matthias Forney in the early 1860s, saw widespread application in the late 19th century on elevated and surface urban transit lines prior to the routes' electrification, as well as with narrow-gauge owners in Maine and elsewhere.

During the 1870s, locomotive manufacturer William Mason of the Mason

Machine Works of Taunton, Mass., licensed Scottish engineer Robert Fairlie's patents for double-ended steam locomotives. He emulated Forney's efforts with a single-ended, but bi-directional tenderless design that became known, in various wheel arrangements, as the Mason Bogie. These locomotives featured articulated driving wheels (the "bogie"), and thus don't meet the strict definition of tank engines having a single, rigid frame. A notable operator of 2-4-4T Mason Bogies in suburban service was the Boston, Revere Beach & Lynn, a 3-foot-gauge line that served its Massachusetts namesakes

Boston & Albany had five Alco 4-6-6 tank locomotives built in 1928. At 352,000 pounds, they were the heaviest suburban tank locomotives built. Alco Historic Photos



with 32 such locomotives until it was electrified in 1928.

In North America, most tank engines designed for bidirectional suburban service had six-coupled wheel arrangements, with three sets of drivers flanked by pilot wheels fore and aft to improve tracking at speed.

Here, then, is a survey of the major operators of suburban tank engines in North America during the 20th century:

BOSTON & MAINE

With a dense network of mainline and branchline suburban services centered on Boston's congested, stub-ended North Station, Boston & Maine employed two classes of tank engines between the 1890s and 1920. A trio of 0-4-4T Forney types built in 1891 lasted until 1913-14, by which time they had been designated Class D-2. Six 2-6-4T locomotives were added to B&M's roster in mid-1895, joining a secondhand 2-6-4T built in 1891. Under B&M's comprehensive 1911 locomotive renumbering, the group of six 2-6-4T locomotives became Class E-1-a Nos. 40-45, the seventh became E-1-b No. 46, and the D-2 trio emerged as Nos. 47-49. All 10 locomotives were products of the Rhode Island Locomotive Works, with 0-4-4T No. 49 having been built as Portland & Rochester No. 11, and 2-6-4T No. 46 as Franklin & Tilton No. 1. Five of the E-1-a locomotives (Nos. 40-44) served B&M commuters until 1920 when — as would happen to similar locomotives in other cities — longer trains and heavier coaches, as well as the locomotives' advancing age ended their careers.

AT A GLANCE // North American Suburban Tank Engine Operators in the 20th Century

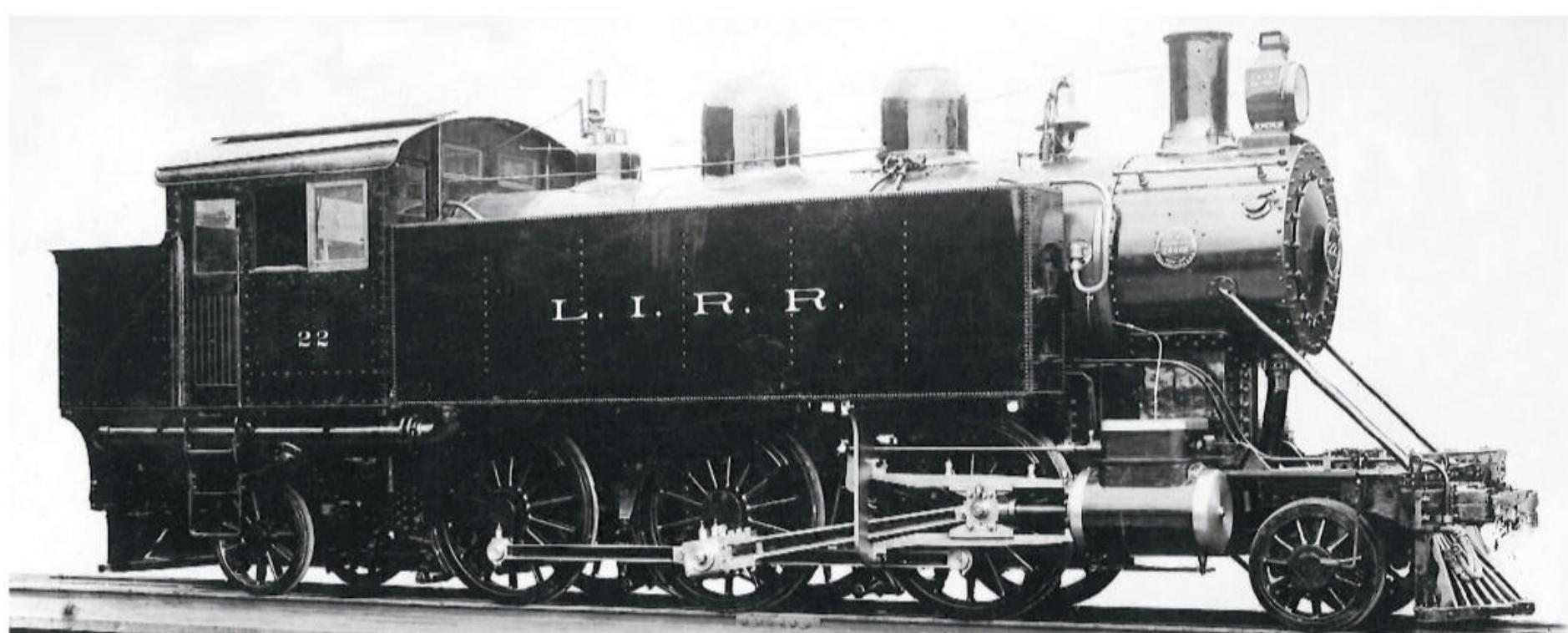
WHEEL ARRANGEMENT	0-4-4T	0-6-2T	2-4-4T	2-4-6T	2-6-2T	2-6-4T	2-6-6T	4-4-2T	4-6-4T	4-6-6T
Boston & Maine	●					●				
Boston & Albany						●				●
New York Central			●			●				
Long Island	●				●					
CNJ					●				●	
Reading						●				
Illinois Central			●	●		●			●	
C&WI					●					
C&EI			●				●			
CB&Q		●								
Rock Island							●			
WC > B&OCT		●	●							
Southern Pacific					●					
Canadian Pacific									●	
Grand Trunk > CN								●	●	

NOTES: New York Central acquired five 2-8-2T engines through lease of the Kanawha & Michigan in 1922, but they were used in W. Va. coal-branch service and not for suburban operations.

BOSTON & ALBANY

This New York Central System property's ten Class L-1 2-6-6T tank engines were built by Alco Schenectady in 1906 and were followed by eight more (Class L-1a) in 1907. Renumbered from their original 1250-1267 series to 300-317 in 1912, they were at home on trains serving Riverside and Framingham, Mass., from Boston's South Station. As built, the L-1 2-6-6T locomotives weighed 229,000

pounds, with 25,900 lbs. tractive effort. They were rebuilt by Lima between 1929 and 1931 as B&A's L-2 and L-3 classes, their performance improved with superheaters, larger cylinders, and higher boiler pressure. They were reclassified again as D-2a (Nos. 300-309) and D-2b (Nos. 310-317) in 1940, clearing the NYC system roster for deliveries of new Class L-3 2-8-2 Mohawk locomotives. All but one were retired in 1950. The exception, No.



Long Island Rail Road (briefly) operated five Class S51 2-6-2T tank locomotives. They were built by Baldwin in 1904 and sold to the CNJ in November 1911. The locomotives were virtually identical to CNJ's 20 own 2-6-2Ts built by Baldwin in 1902-03. Classic Trains collection

BY THE NUMBERS // The "Big Three" Suburban Tank Engines in Postwar Mainline Service

	WHEEL ARR.	CLASS	ROAD NOS.	BUILDER	DATE	CYLIN-DERS	PRESSURE	DRIVER DIA.	LOADED WT.	T.E.	COAL (TONS)	WATER (GAL)
Boston & Albany	4-6-6T	D-1a	400-404	Alco Schenectady	1928	23.5x26	215 psi	63"/64"	352,000	41,600	6	5,000
Central of New Jersey	4-6-4T	H-1 / SU-31	225-230	Baldwin	1923	21x26	200 psi	63"	291,700	30,940	6	4,000
Canadian National	4-6-4T	X-10-a	45-50	MLW	1914	21x26	210 psi	63"	275,000	32,487	5	2,900
NOTES: B&A 402 renumbered NYC 1297 in 1951, CNR 45-50 built as Grand Trunk 1540-1545, Class K2												

305, served as shop switcher X305 at Selkirk, N.Y., until late 1952.

B&A received a group of five larger Class D-1a 4-6-6T locomotives from Alco Schenectady in 1928, delivered as Nos. 400-404. Weighing 352,000 pounds and producing 41,600 pounds of tractive effort, they were the largest, and last, suburban tank engines built in North America. In his *Guide to North American Steam Locomotives*, George H. Drury described their appearance as "condensed, telescoped versions of parent NYC's Hudsons" and there was indeed a strong family resemblance. B&A's five 4-6-6T locomotives made it to the 1950s, barely, being replaced by diesels in 1950-51. No. 402 lasted long enough to be renumbered NYC 1297 before retirement in 1951.

NEW YORK CENTRAL

In 1901, NYC acquired 16 2-6-6T locomotives from Alco Schenectady for

suburban service on the railroad's Harlem and Hudson divisions north of New York City, routes that would soon be electrified as part of the railroad's Grand Central Terminal redevelopment.

Numbered 1407-1422, these J and Ja class locomotives were unpopular with crews who disliked operating them backwards and found them lacking in water capacity. Deemed inadequate as built for their suburban assignments, NYC converted them into Class E-11 2-6-0 Moguls, with conventional tenders, in 1905. (Some sources report that these locomotives served on the Boston & Albany immediately prior to their conversion.)

Having entered the 20th century with seven 1888-vintage Rogers 2-4-4T Forney locomotives handling suburban duties on its Putnam Division north of New York City, NYC acquired five more examples of this type from Alco (Brooks) in 1910 and a final five from the same builder in 1912. By that time, most of the Rogers

locomotives had been retired.

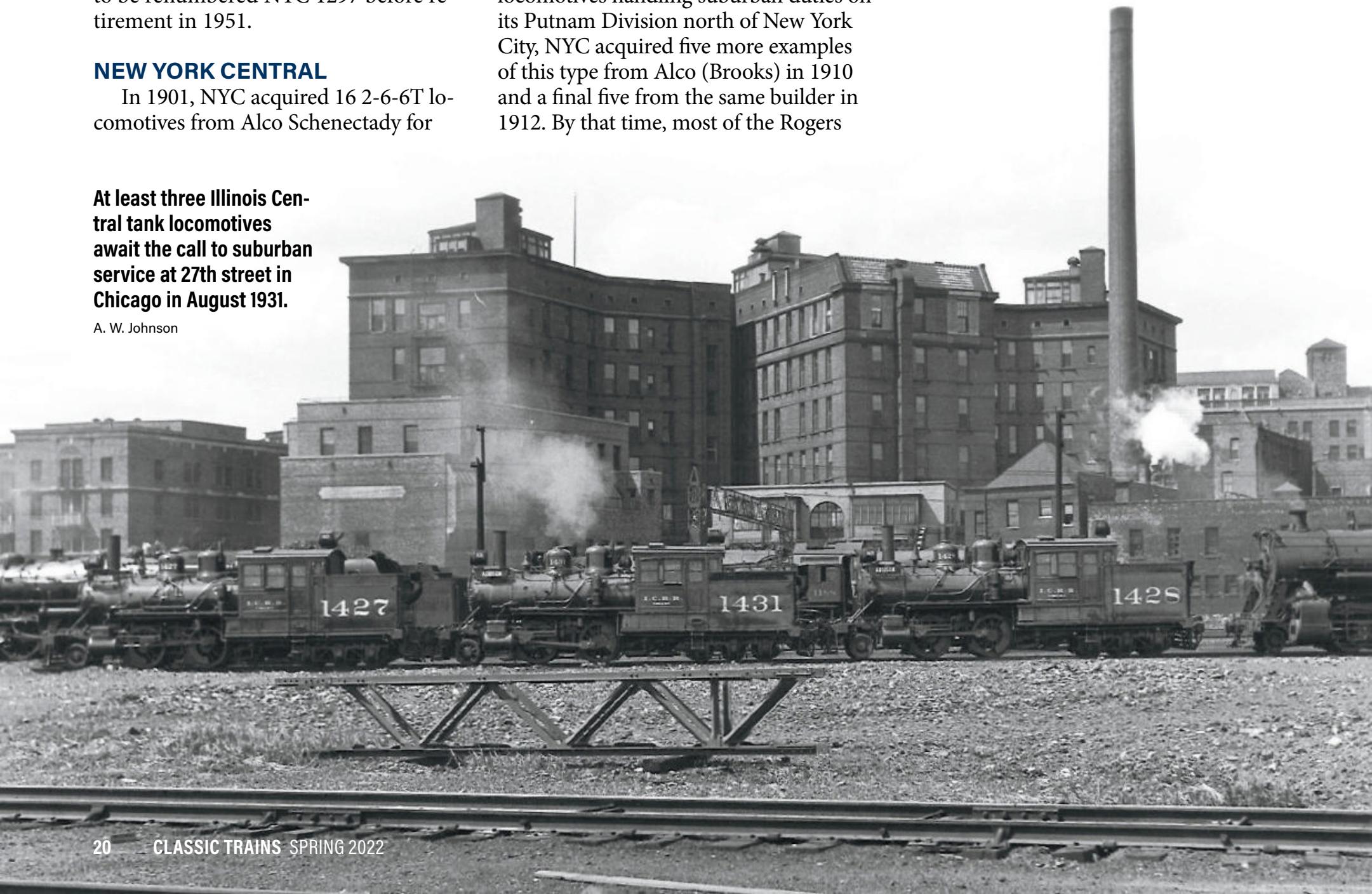
The first group of Alco locomotives was assigned Class D-1A and numbered 42, 44, 47-49 (interspersed with the surviving Rogers locomotives); the second Alco quintet was Class D-2A, delivered as Nos. 37-41. The latter were subsequently renumbered 1911-1915, and their five older siblings became 1916-1920. Denizens of NYC's Yonkers branch, they were retired in 1926 upon the line's electrification.

LONG ISLAND

In addition to 10 0-4-4T Forney locomotives built by Baldwin (Burnham, Wil-

At least three Illinois Central tank locomotives await the call to suburban service at 27th street in Chicago in August 1931.

A. W. Johnson



liams & Co.) in 1892 as Nos. 150-159, the Long Island Rail Road operated five side-tank 2-6-2T locomotives as Class S51, Nos. 20-24. These were built by Baldwin in 1904 but didn't last long in LIRR service; they were sold to the Central of New Jersey in November 1911.

CENTRAL OF NEW JERSEY

CNJ amassed a sizeable fleet of 2-6-2T locomotives with side water tanks for service between Jersey City (Communipaw) and Perth Amboy (21 miles), and Jersey City-Somerville (35 miles). Baldwin built 20 Class J-1 locomotives in 1902-03 as CNJ Nos. 200-219. To expedite filling and avoid imbalance, the tanks flanking the boiler were cross-connected and filled via a single pipe. The locomotives were reclassified "J-1s" after being rebuilt with superheaters in the 1920s.

These 20 locomotives were followed by five more virtually identical examples (Nos. 220-224) acquired from the LIRR in 1911. After three decades of service, retirements began in the mid-1930s as longer trains of heavier coaches took a toll on performance, with 15 CNJ 2-6-2T locomotives remaining active on the eve of World War II. The nine wartime survivors were reclassified SU-23 in 1945, but by mid-year all had been purged from the roster.

CNJ acquired a second group of larger tank engines in 1923, Class H 4-6-4T Nos. 225-230. These were built by Baldwin with end tanks and resembled six 4-6-4T locomotives built in Canada for the Grand Trunk Railway in 1914 (see below). Reclassed as SU-31, the last of these CNJ locomotives was retired in 1950.

READING

In Philadelphia, Reading Co. employed ten 2-6-4T locomotives built by Baldwin in 1903-04 as Class Q1-a (Nos. 376-381) and Q1-b (Nos. 382-385). Assigned for the most part to Reading's Chestnut Hill branch, they were reclassified Q1-c and Q1-d after a 1921 rebuilding. All 10 were retired and scrapped in the early 1930s, following electrification of Reading's suburban operations.

ILLINOIS CENTRAL

In Chicago, Illinois Central's well-patronized suburban services to points south of the city made use of several tank-engine wheel arrangements after 1880. They included 2-4-4T, 2-4-6T, 2-6-4T, and 4-6-4T types. Ten 2-4-6T locomotives were built by Rogers in 1893 numbered 241-250; they were later renumbered 1424-1433.

While some roads converted mainline tank engines into conventional tender-equipped configurations, IC became adept at doing the opposite. Sixteen of IC's 18 2-6-4T locomotives were rebuilt from conventional 1890s-vintage 2-6-0 locomotives in 1912 (as 2-6-4T Nos. 1441-1448) and 1920-21 (as Nos. 1449-1456), with the other two built as tank engines by Rogers in 1892. Seven 4-6-4T locomotives (Nos. 1434-1440) were created in 1901 and 1904 by rebuilding conventional 4-6-0 locomotives dating to the 1880s.

Electrification of IC's suburban opera-

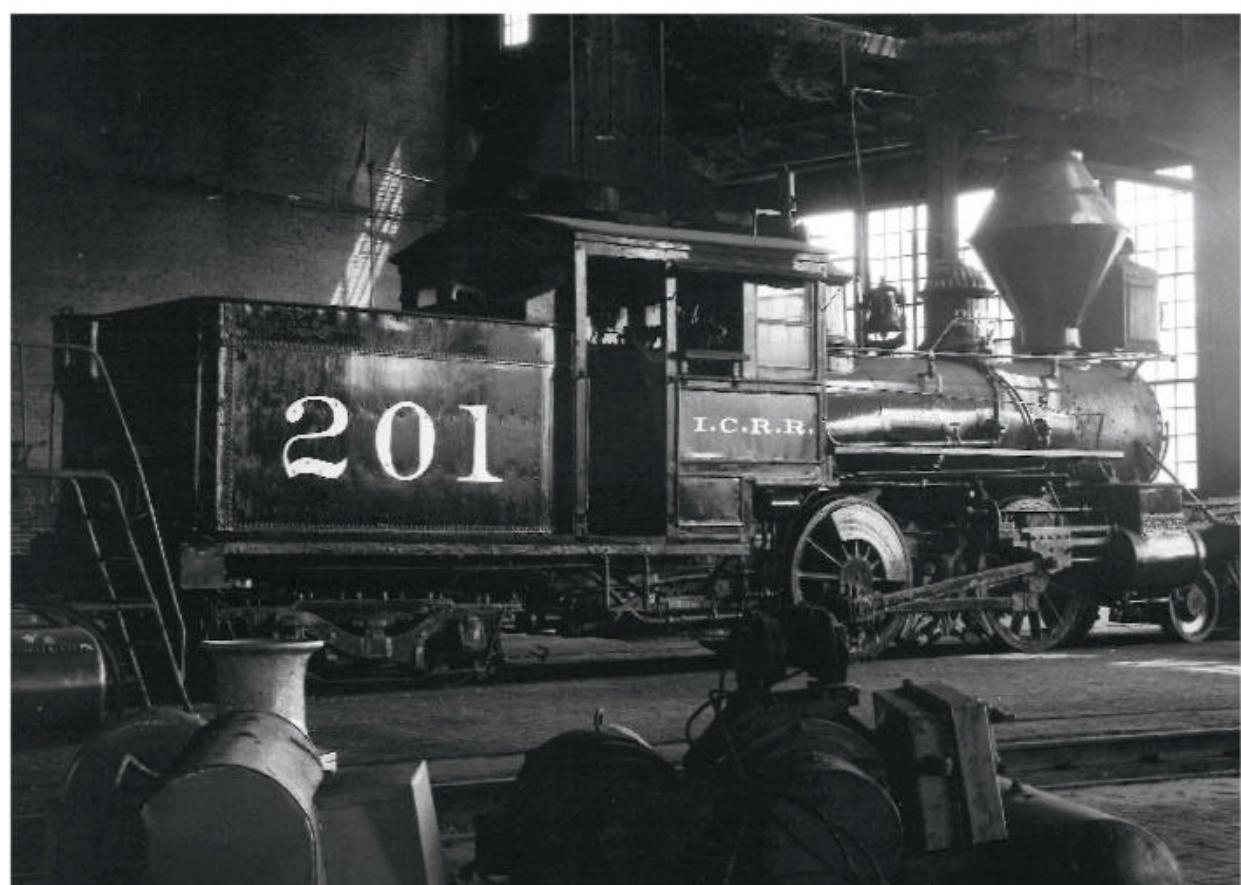
tions in 1926 led to the tank engines' demise, though some were reassigned to yard duties until the mid-1930s. One example — oft-renumbered 2-4-4T No. 201, built by Rogers in 1880 — survives at the Illinois Railway Museum.

ELSEWHERE IN CHICAGOLAND

Chicago & Western Indiana acquired three side-tank 2-6-2T locomotives from Rogers in 1904 for service on the 16.6-mile route between Chicago's Dearborn Station and Dolton, Ill. Delivered as Nos. 100-102, they were subsequently renum-



CNJ 2-6-2T 200 arrives at Newark in January 1938 with a commuter shuttle from Elizabethport. CNJ had 25 Baldwin-built tank engines for commuter service. Bob Lewis



IC 2-4-4T No. 201, built in 1880 as the 1401, rests in the Markham Yard roundhouse in August 1957 as a historic piece. The locomotive was later displayed outside a restaurant near Peoria between 1965 and 1975. It resides today at the Illinois Railway Museum in Union. Bruce Meyer

bered 2-4, and then 202-204.

For its suburban operations, Chicago & Eastern Illinois employed two small groups of 2-4-4T locomotives acquired from Hinkley in 1887 (Nos. 62-65) and Alco Schenectady in 1891 (Nos. 50-51). C&EI then acquired four 2-6-6T locomotives from Schenectady in 1892-93, numbered 46-49; these were rebuilt as conventional 2-6-0 locomotives between 1897 and 1907.

Between 1889 and 1911, Chicago, Burlington & Quincy used five homebuilt 0-6-2T locomotives, Class I Nos. 500-504, in suburban service between Chicago and Aurora.

Rock Island's Chicago suburban operations were served for more than three decades by six 2-6-6T locomotives built by Baldwin in 1893. Delivered as Class K-17, Nos. 1001-1006, they were subsequently reclassified 27-A and F-16 and renumbered 606-606 and 1051-1056. All were disposed of during 1926-27.

After a succession of ownership changes, a pair of 2-4-4T locomotives and a 2-4-6T built by Baldwin in 1886 and 1887, respectively, for Wisconsin Central ended their careers on the Baltimore & Ohio Chicago Terminal between 1913 and 1917. By the time of its 1913 retirement as B&OCT Class R No. 625, the 2-4-6T had become a 2-4-4T.

FURTHER AFIELD

Although mainline tank engines were embraced by logging railroads and other specialized operators — New York Central's five former Kanawha & Michigan 2-8-2T locomotives used in West Virginia coal branch service being a notable application on a Class I railroad — their adoption for suburban service beyond the U.S. cities noted previously was rare.

In the West, Southern Pacific operated a group of seven Class S-1 2-6-2T locomotives built in 1881-82 by Central Pacific's Sacramento Shops. Having outlived their usefulness in East Bay suburban service, they faced retirement or conversion as 0-6-2T yard and shop engines before the end of World War I. One example, SP No. 1903, survives near its birthplace in the California State Railroad Museum collection in Sacramento.

NORTH OF THE BORDER

Canada's first suburban tank locomotives appeared in 1883, when the Grand Trunk Railway built five 4-4-2T saddle-tank locomotives in its Montreal shops as Class K1 Nos. 201-205. They spent their lives running on GT's main line between Bonaventure Station and Montreal's "Lakeshore" communities. Under their final GT numbering as 1526-1530, only No. 1527 survived long

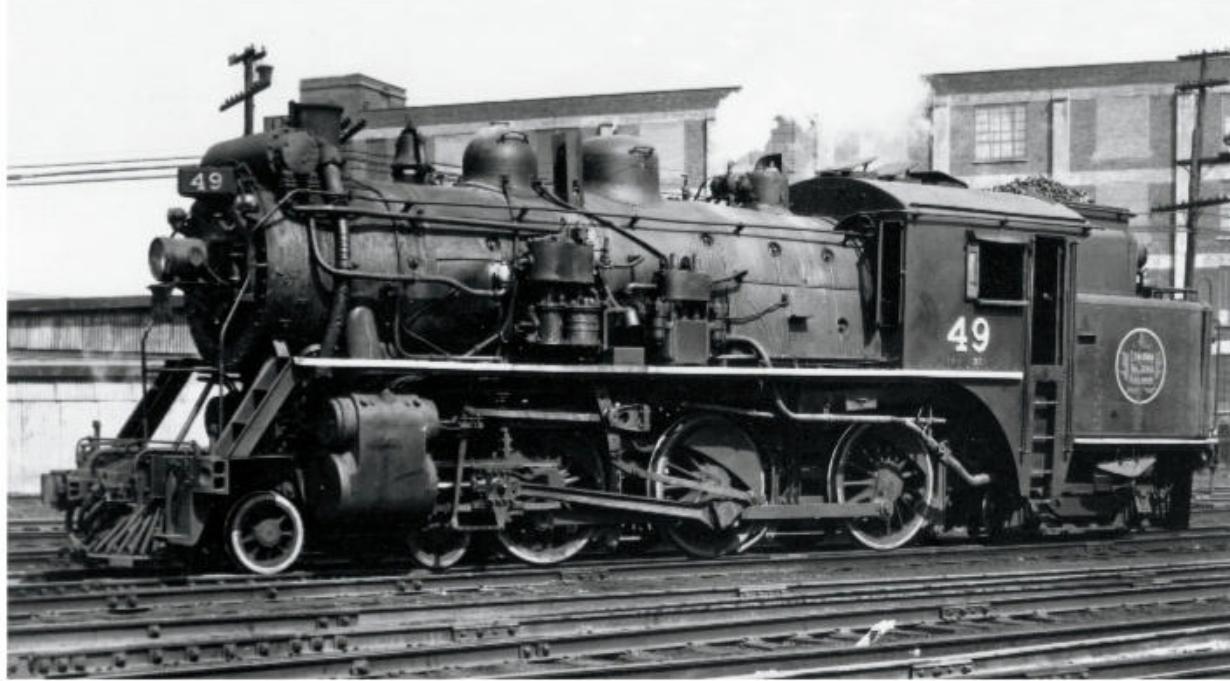
enough to be assigned a Canadian National number (41) and classification (X-8-a) before retirement in 1923.

Toronto's Belt Line Railway — conceived as a bypass around that city's increasingly congested core — received five side-tank 4-4-2T locomotives in 1892, also built by GT. After the two-year-old Belt Line failed to meet expectations and passenger service ended in 1894, GT took over the property. The tank engines migrated to GT's commuter pool in Montreal, with three sold to subsidiary Thousand Islands Railway in the 1920s. (Before these 4-4-2T locomotives arrived on the TIR, two diminutive tank engines acquired secondhand in 1894 and sold in 1912 — a 2-4-2T and an 0-4-2T — powered the connecting one-car passenger service between GT's main line and downtown Gananoque, three miles away on the north shore of the St. Lawrence River.) In CN service, these 4-4-2T locomotives became Class X-9-a. Numbered 42-44 (formerly GT Nos. 1249-1251 and then 1531-1533), they were disposed of between 1925 and 1934.

Thanks to their longevity, Canadian

Canadian Pacific 4-6-4T 5992 appears in suburban service at Lanoraie, Quebec, in August 1934. O.P. Maus photo, James A. Brown collection





Canadian National X-10-a class 4-6-4T No. 49 reposes at Turcot Yard in Montreal in July 1957. These were the best-known tank engines in Canada due to their longevity. James A. Brown collection

National's X-10-a class of 4-6-4T locomotives — a group of six built by Montreal Locomotive Works for GT in 1914 as Class K2 Nos. 1540-1545 — became the best-known tank engines in Canada.

Coming under CN ownership a decade later and renumbered 45-50, all but one of these locomotives remained in mainline commuter service until 1959 (No. 45 was retired in 1956). They were more than twice as heavy as the 4-4-2T power they replaced, enabling GT to introduce longer trains on the 24-mile Montreal-Vaudreuil, Que., Lakeshore run and the 37-mile route between Montreal and St. Hyacinthe. Three of the six X-10-a locomotives were preserved — two in Canada, and one that's now part of the

Steamtown collection. The design was even featured on a Canadian postage stamp in 1985.

Canadian Pacific rostered four suburban tank engines, serving Montreal commuters on the 47-mile run between Montreal's Windsor Station, Rigaud and Point Fortune, Que. All were 4-6-4T locomotives built in the railroad's Montreal shops. The first was delivered in 1893 as Class T-1-a No. 624, becoming No. 1950, 1995 and 5990 in subsequent re-numberings before its 1924 retirement. The next two CP side-tank engines were built in 1910 as Class T-2-a Nos. 1991-1992, becoming Nos. 5991-5992 in 1912, when they were joined by No. 5993. These latter three had two-decade

careers, reassigned in the 1920s to less-demanding Montreal-area branch lines before being retired in 1934.

MEETING THEIR END

In Chicago, Philadelphia and metropolitan New York City, electrification brought down the curtain for most suburban tank engines by the 1930s, with the newest and largest of these distinctive locomotives — on the Boston & Albany, Jersey Central, and CN — lasting long enough for diesels to finish the job. Form once again followed function, with utilitarian diesel road switchers prevailing on routes not served by overhead catenary.

Writing in the CN Historical Association's journal *CN Lines*, Canadian National Montreal headquarters staffer Lorne Perry recalled his daily 1950s routine riding behind the X-10-a locomotives: "Every start was with the rapid acceleration a diesel could only envy. ... Every stop was a last-minute affair, racing almost to the beginning of the platform and then applying all brakes, hard. A screeching stop in the same spot day after day, so as not to confuse the glazed-eyed commuters."

No matter where those commuters lived and worked, whether in Boston, Philadelphia, New York or elsewhere, so well-suited were the compact and powerful tank engines to the time-sensitive trains they pulled that few riders knew how specialized — and how special — they were. ■

KEVIN J. HOLLAND is a writer, editor, and graphic designer living in Ontario.



The engineer looks out of the cab of CP 4-6-4T No. 5992 at Lanoraie, Quebec, in August 1934. The railroad had four such homebuilt locomotives. O.P. Maus photo, James A. Brown collection



THE LAST OF THE BRASS P



Learning a dying craft was the first step to becoming a dispatcher on the Canadian Pacific

BY DOUGLAS J. FEAR // Photos by the author

FOUNDERS

The craft of telegrapher was given the moniker “brass pounder” for the operators’ skill with the telegraph key. Telegraphers were located at stations and in certain instances, remote temporary locations. They copied train orders and clearances and train line-ups issued by train dispatchers located miles away who controlled train movements.



The Havelock track crew sets its Fairmont motorcar on, having moved it from its shelter in the station, adjacent to author Fear's bunk-room. Train 90's power is in the process of being split for the two locals operating that day.



Three Geeps sit atop the Toronto Yard hump with a scale test car to calibrate the scales atop the hump and the retarders into the bowl.

Train orders and clearances were issued in a specific form prescribed by rule. They authorized the operation of trains, directed meets, conferred the right of trains over others, established schedules, specified meets and times, as well as other warnings and restrictions. Brass pounders were the eyes and ears of the dispatcher.

By the time I came to the craft, the telegraph had long been replaced by voice communication and we were referred to simply as "Train Order Operators." In April 1988, I hired on Canadian Pacific in this capacity.

Like the venerable old caboose whose days were numbered, so too was my craft. Based out of Toronto Yard, I held no regular job, and my first assignment was midnights in CP's expansive terminal and hump yard at the east end of Toronto. For more than a month I worked nights with Tuesdays and Wednesdays off, a far cry from Monday-to-Friday 9-to-5.

I provided trains with clearances, orders, bulletins, consists, power assignments, crew packs, radios, and spare batteries. I reported to the Calling Bureau, the diesel shop, the dispatchers, and crews of the Mactier/North Toronto,

Belleville, Galt, and Havelock subdivisions, as well as any official who knocked at my door. I copied clearances, orders, manual block system bulletins and made photocopies or mimeographs to provide a plentiful supply.

Trains were ordered by the dispatchers providing me the train number and an ordering time. I would call the Calling Bureau, which would notify the engineers, conductors, and trainmen; it would call back with their names for my supply sheet. Same for the diesel shop: I called it and its personnel would supply me with the locomotive numbers. It wasn't uncommon for a train to be held for crew rest or availability of suitable power. I reported each train's supply to the dispatcher for his train sheet.

Then in early May, the Director of Train Operations called telling me I was to report to Mactier, Ontario, a division point between Sudbury and Toronto. I jumped at the chance to work days and finally be off straight midnights.

MACTIER CALLING

Mactier was a division point 120 miles north of Toronto. It was deep in the heart

of "cottage country" and the locale was beautiful. Surrounded by lakes and nearby Georgian Bay, the pines were bountiful and the scent heavenly. As at Toronto Yard, I copied clearances and bulletins from both the Parry Sound Sub and Mactier Sub dispatchers, providing consists when needed and handing out crew packs and radios, but now it was I who was the Calling Bureau, waking crews laying over to head back to Toronto or calling local north end employees to come to work. Mactier truly felt like CP's transcontinental main line with hotshot container trains headed for Winnipeg, Calgary, and Vancouver.

I fell in over my head. It wasn't difficult to get a handle on who was out-bound to Toronto. Crews came in and usually booked similar rest, so they went out as they came in: engineer, conductor, and trainman in the same groupings. Some Toronto crews had their own camps and cottages in the area where I would call them to come to work.

However, it was an altogether new experience calling the Mactier-based crews. The north end spare board was both challenging and convoluted. Union

CP IN ONTARIO



Yard Coordinator Bobby Venn scans the west entrance to the yard from the North Toronto Sub. The line handled trains from and to the Belleville, Galt, Mactier, and Havelock subdivisions.

rules for each trade were different and rest rules seemed made-up on the fly. Before long, I was getting hell from both management and crews. More frustrating yet was the bunk house where I stayed. It was located close to the tracks and every train awakened me. Whining EMDs sat not 100 feet away and sleep was often difficult.

Paydays were a new experience. Like Toronto, I was accustomed to crews diving into my desk for their checks. None were in separate, sealed envelopes and all details were visible. Everyone knew how much each other was making, who was working extra trips, and who was work-

ing the spare board to his advantage. Crews could determine who was taking minimum rest to make more money and who had been "off for miles," accruing their maximum in a pay period.

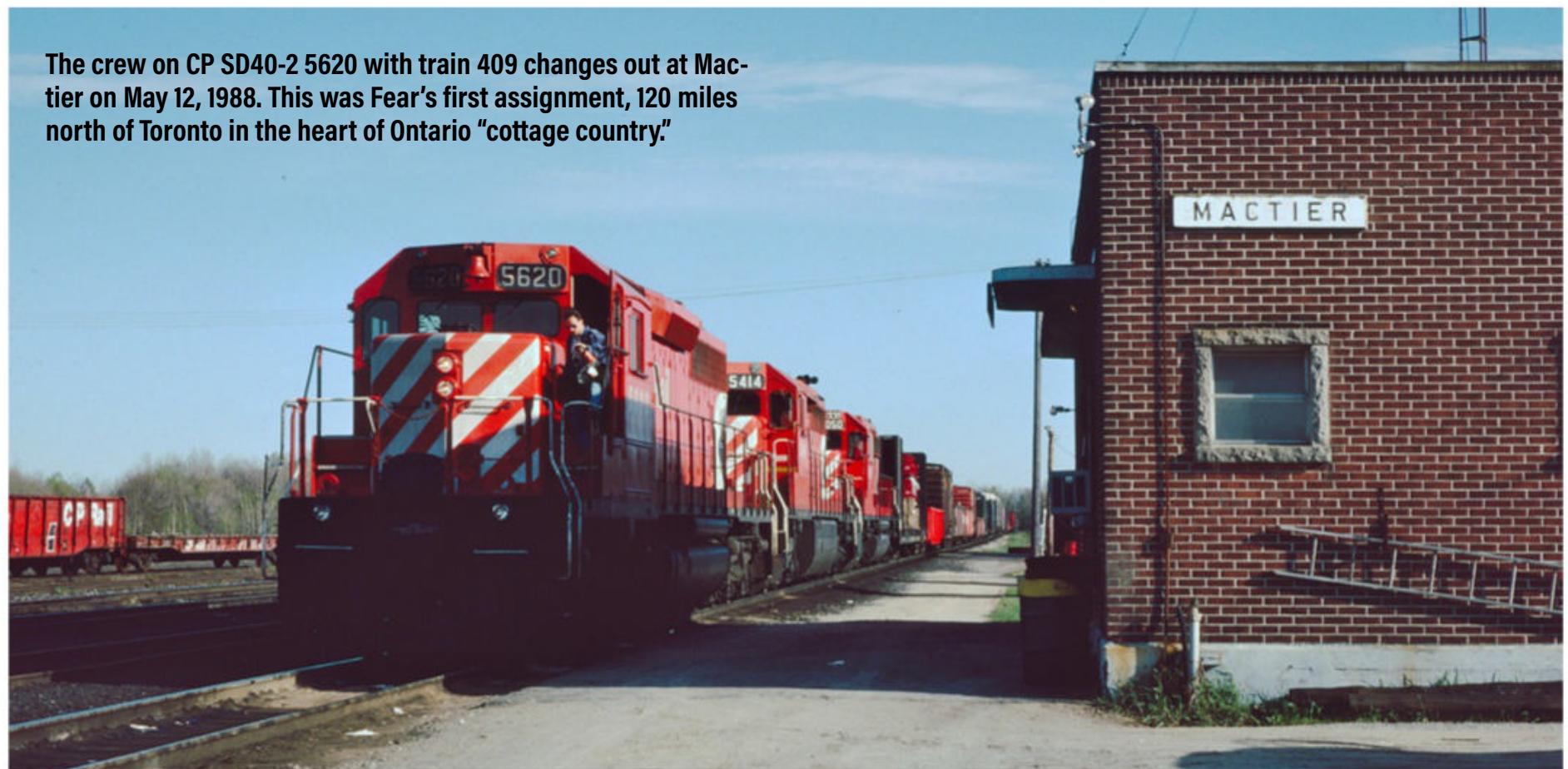
News to me, however, was that I had to hand over paychecks to the wives of the north end crews. Fail to do so and you were berated by an angry one. As was explained to me, the wives claimed the checks to ensure the money didn't disappear at the local bar or in a high-stakes card game. It truly was a culture shock.

Train 955 originated in Toronto, terminating in Winnipeg. Northbound 955 was a pick-up, which collected and set

out cars between those points. Crews hated being called for it. There could be work at Emery, Bolton, Midhurst, Medonte, and even Mactier. North from Mactier the work was similar.

Victoria Day weekend in late May is Canada's first long summertime one. Cottages are opened that weekend and vacationers prepare by frequenting the beverage stores. I was working Victoria Day when the call came to supply a north end crew for 955. I called the engineman first up according to the pool, which seemed straightforward, then began calling conductors. I worked my way through the latter pool to no avail. Working my way

The crew on CP SD40-2 5620 with train 409 changes out at MacTier on May 12, 1988. This was Fear's first assignment, 120 miles north of Toronto in the heart of Ontario "cottage country."





Early morning May 24, 1988, finds the "Budd car," VIA train 187, set to leave Havelock. Parked overnight at the station, it sits next to the night train 90, recently arrived from Toronto.

through the spare board, I was given any number of excuses: "on rest" or "I should be calling so-and-so."

The list of reasons not to come to work grew with each successive phone call, if it was answered at all. I advised the Terminal Supervisor, and he too began making calls, finally locating a willing, qualified conductor.

When it came to providing a trainman, it became even tougher. Not one could be located. We called everyone, effectively "rolling the pool" until we found a conductor willing to work as a trainman.

I'd surely had my fill of Mactier and later learned someone had put a "run-around" ticket in against me, grieving that I had somehow violated the union agreement bypassing his turn.

HAVEN IN HAVELOCK

After two weeks at Mactier I was requested to go to Havelock. It was another remote outpost on the Toronto Division, an hour and 40-minute drive from my home west of Toronto. Happy to be out of Mactier, I made the trip to the new location.

The Havelock Subdivision was a truncated section of the former Ontario & Quebec Railway, once the east-west route between Montreal and Toronto. Portions of the route were abandoned in 1971 and 1988 between Glen Tay and Blairton, 3 miles east of Havelock. The sub was scenic, a bit remote, and almost always assigned a mix of MLW C424s and RS18s.

On arrival at the station, I located the bunk room and the operator's office. Carrying my kit into my quarters I was welcomed by the overpowering smell of kerosene and gasoline. All the comforts

of home were present including a black-and-white TV (which received two stations), a stove, refrigerator, and a dining table surrounded by four caboose chairs. I had a wonderful view of the rail yard and discovered the shower vented through the track car garage and store-room. I'm sure I smelled like a Fairmont speeder for weeks. The six-cot bunk room backed onto a busy two-lane highway not 15 feet behind the north wall.

As I settled into my sleeping bag that night, I wondered what I had signed up for. Away-from-home train crews stayed at the Moonlight Motel just down the road.

The next morning, I was up early and ready to clear the Toronto-bound Peterborough Budd cars (train 187) for their daily commute into Toronto. The train crew helped me through the routine and

soon after, the terminal supervisor arrived and directed me to perform a yard check after the RDCs had left town at 5:47 a.m. This was all new and I handled it enthusiastically.

The yard check was done to verify the cars on the night turn (train 90) had arrived. Until a year earlier, trains 90 and 91 were scheduled wayfreights between Havelock and Toronto returning in the early morning hours. No longer scheduled, 91 departed at about 8:30 p.m., arriving in Toronto Yard around midnight.

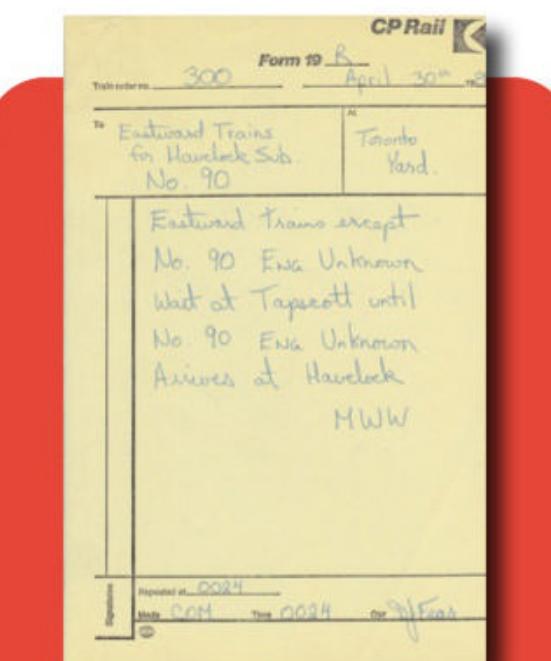
A month earlier, I had copied the final train order issued on the Havelock, addressed to No. 90. Thereafter, the subdivision was put under Manual Block System Rules (a form of Canadian track warrant) and No. 90 obtained clearance by radio from the Toronto dispatcher. A second-trick operator at Havelock was no longer required and I clocked out at 1:30 p.m., free for the rest of the day.

Two day jobs ran out of Havelock: the Peterborough and the Nephton Turn. The former ran into its namesake town switching Quaker Oats downtown and occasionally ran west to Fleetwood Industries, a manufacturer of recreational campers. It departed around 10 a.m., returning early to mid-afternoon.

The Nephton Turn ran northward to serve two mines: the Nephton Mine at Mile 16 and the Blue Mountain Mine at end-of-track. The Nephton Sub was laid in 1954 at a cost of \$1.3 million when it became lucrative to move the pit-mined nepheline syenite by rail. Used in the manufacture of glass, paint, and ceramics such as toilets and sinks, it is one of only two sources of the mineral in the world and traffic was heavy. Up to 40 loaded covered hopper cars lettered for Indusmin were brought south daily, with a comparable supply of empties heading north.

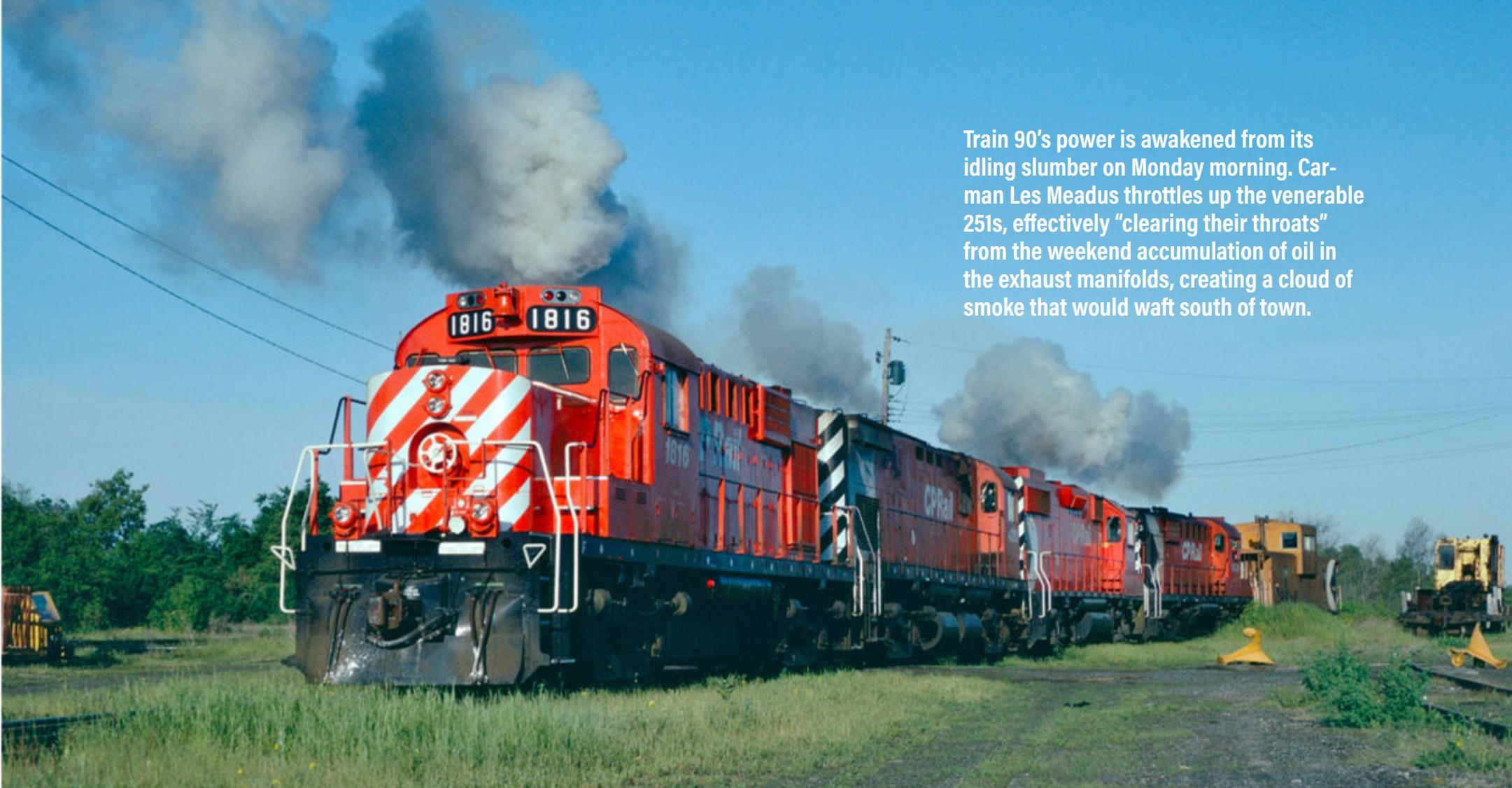
Assembly of the train was complete by 1 p.m. and the Nephton Turn was northbound a half-hour later, a fortuitous coincidence. As a potential dispatcher candidate, I was permitted to ride under the guise of "familiarization trips" and got to know the crew who was brotherly and kind. They never objected to being photographed while at work. The secret was to be less the photographer and more the added crew member to help throw switches and assist with moves when called upon. Truly, no crew would turn down help for an early quit!

With my camera bag tucked safely under my seat on the left side of the cab, we eased out of the yard, listening for the countdown at the Nephton Sub main



The last written train order on CP's Havelock Subdivision displays Fear's signature at bottom right.

Train 90's power is awakened from its idling slumber on Monday morning. Carman Les Meadus throttles up the venerable 251s, effectively "clearing their throats" from the weekend accumulation of oil in the exhaust manifolds, creating a cloud of smoke that would waft south of town.



track switch. Conductor Evans dropped off, lined the switch, and, with a trio of MLW units on the point, we were soon northbound under the roar of 251 prime movers billowing a black-smoke overcast behind. Northward, we rode past a few farms, encountering more and more conifers on our way into the Canadian Shield. The track was good for 30 mph and we took advantage of every bit of it. We rolled past Milepost 9 and the short 1,085-foot siding at South Lake. Eight miles later we began to slow for the Nephton Mine. An aquamarine tailings pond spread off to the west with pure white sand skirting its shores. Every rock and trail as well as the roadbed was the brilliant white of the underlying nepheline.

Winds whipped dust devils nearby as we detrained to begin our switching of the warehouse and loading areas. I followed trainman Jack Riddell and conductor Wayne Evans as they lined switches and coupled cars, lifted loads and shoved empties in and out of the docks and plant, feeding the tracks and arranging our outbound train. We wyed our power, coupled to a string of empties and caboose, and began our easy 4-mile shove back toward the Blue Mountain loadout. As we neared the loading facility, Conductor Evans began transmitting a car count by radio, providing the distance to go starting at 40 cars. Oddly, no response was received. As we got closer to the mine and loading tracks, the count became



The Nephton Turn switches out the 3M mine 3 miles east of Havelock. The power lifts car-loads of sand once used in the manufacture of shingles. The facility is now closed.

more frequent with fewer cars to go. Still, no response came from the head-end, but we were slowing.

Briefly explaining to Jack and me how a radio signal could be lost in the rocks of the Canadian Shield, he directed us to bail off. After one more transmission to *stop!*, he pulled the emergency cord and we stepped clear of the van. With only a few cars to spare before contacting a standing cut of cars, the train stopped. Only then did radio contact resume. The head-end hadn't heard a word; the car count was completely lost to the airwaves, bouncing off rocks, dissipating into the ether. It was a lesson to be recalled for any spare man working the Nephton.

Being late May, the blackflies were ag-

gressive. On this, my first trip up, I manned a switch, took photos, and swatted the pests. The latter led Jack and Wayne to ask whether I had developed a new set of hand signals specific to the territory. I heard about my unorthodox hand signals for some time afterward.

With our switching complete, it was time to head south, collect our train at Nephton, test the brakes, and scratch the newly acquired and numerous itchy welts en route home. I chose to ride the caboose, or "van" as we call them here in eastern Canada. Riding there afforded me a different perspective, one that would eventually disappear into the annals of history.

As I watched the bobbing and rocking



"The Transfer" crosses the Don Valley at Leaside in January 1989. This day it rated some relatively new GP38-2s as it transported a pair of SW1200RSs across town to Lambton where they would be set off to supply local jobs.

of some 30-plus covered hoppers strung out in front of me, Conductor Wayne Evans produced an unfinished wooden duck decoy on which he was working. We relaxed in the cupola, observing our undulating train move through woods, along swamps and ponds, and climbing some easy grades. Wayne shared with me the story of the recent invasion of tent caterpillars which covered the railhead and brought the train to a stop. The crew was forced to double their train over the modest southward grade. The first trip over, they sanded the rail, pulling a short section of their train into Havelock, returning for the other half of the train over what had by now become caterpillar grease.

I made subsequent trips on the Nephhton job, occasionally chasing it in my pick-up truck with most days ending at the historic local hotel we dubbed "The

Havelock Hilton." Many a trip concluded there with discussions of the events of the day. At least two bottles of beer were required to wash the syenite dust from one's throat. Generally, "what happened at the Havelock Hilton, stayed at the Havelock Hilton," where lies were swapped and good times were had.

I continued to ride the Nephhton a few times a week during my all-too-brief stay. It was a "peach" of a posting, but the regular operator soon returned from vacation, and I went back home to Toronto.

BACK TO TORONTO

Upon returning, several new operators had been hired behind me. All of us were destined to become CP's new crop of dispatchers. This earned me a better turn, yet I still didn't have the seniority to hold a permanent assignment. I briefly held

"The Swing" at Toronto. Working Thursday and Friday afternoons (4 p.m. to midnight), Saturday and Sunday days (8 a.m. to 4 p.m.), and doubling back on Sunday midnight, the "Swing" gave me Saturday nights off and a three-day weekend. Thursdays and Fridays were busy with many trains ordered and I met almost everyone on the spare board, handling mark-up of all the local jobs in Toronto on Monday mornings.

I made a good friend of the clerk in the diesel shop planner's office since we had most weekend shifts in common. He had many years of service but virtually no seniority as jobs were abolished behind him. Often talking on the phone during quiet periods, we did our best to keep one another awake on that last Monday morning shift.

I recall one Monday morning at 4 a.m. I received a rather chirpy call from him asking what time it was. I replied, "Time for bed, Robbin."

In a cheerful sing-song tone he replied, "No buddy, it's lunch time!"

I'm sure my response was one of labored dismay having put four long days behind me. Robbin was good company in those wee hours and afterward we often met for breakfast at the beanery located in the bunkhouse near the hump. Many away-from-home employees laying over likely received little rest due to the noise from the shuttling of the hump power and the squealing of wheels through the retarders. Eventually, the Toronto Yard bunk house and beanery were closed when CP contracted more nearby hotels to accommodate crews on rest.

I found fellow railroaders who were also closet railfans and model railroaders. Namely Robbin, planning clerk at the diesel shop; Harry, a recently set-up hogger; and one of the car-control clerks, David, in the general yard office who eventually rose to the position of dispatcher. All but one has since retired. They were family and the people I saw more often than my own. With odd shifts and days off, we planned railfan trips, hung out together and on Saturday nights gathered with our significant ladies for some great food and a few beverages.

Mercifully, Sundays were quiet. Only a handful of trains were ordered, and little effort was required to stay on top of the few requests from the dispatcher's office. Yet each Sunday, CP would order "The Transfer." This train cleaned up Toronto Yard, moving empties to Lambton Yard in the west end for furtherance or simply moving traffic closer to downtown for the

local jobs the following day.

I was never sure what power the diesel shop would supply, and the engineman on that job was normally not too happy with the power he was assigned. Historically, "The Empress of Agincourt," CP's only MLW RSD17, No. 8921, handled The Transfer. Well suited to the task, it became her regular assignment. Once she was reassigned to Montreal, though, the shop could only provide what most engineman considered 'junk' power that labored heavily on the climb back to Agincourt.

Engineman Ron McKay, a middle-aged outdoorsman, was assigned to The Transfer. At 6-feet 4-inches tall, he possessed a sardonic wit and great sense of humor. Nicknamed "Hatrack" for his rather abused stock of ball caps, Ron would come to me with a sour look asking what junk they were giving him for his train. He was happy only with a pair of reliable SD40-2s, but I frequently had to disappoint him with old C424s or worse.

Sarcastically, he would ask if I was responsible for the crappy power until one morning I decided to give him some of CP's finest. Although the diesel shop had assigned the power and called me with The Transfer's unit numbers, I decided to substitute the slip of paper with my own



In her heyday holding down "The Transfer" on a daily basis, celebrity MLW RSD17 8921, "The Empress of Agincourt," hammers west across the diamond at West Toronto in August 1976.

concoction. On it I gave him the numbers for an RS3, a pair of S4s, and an unrebuilt RS18, most of which were gone from CP's roster.

When he looked at the slip, the air turned blue with invective. Ron was acrimonious. He couldn't believe that he had to work with this lot of junk. Slowly a smile began to break on my face and as it did so, he realized he was being had. I told him that his actual power wasn't going to look so bad after all. We jabbed at one another, I was called various names

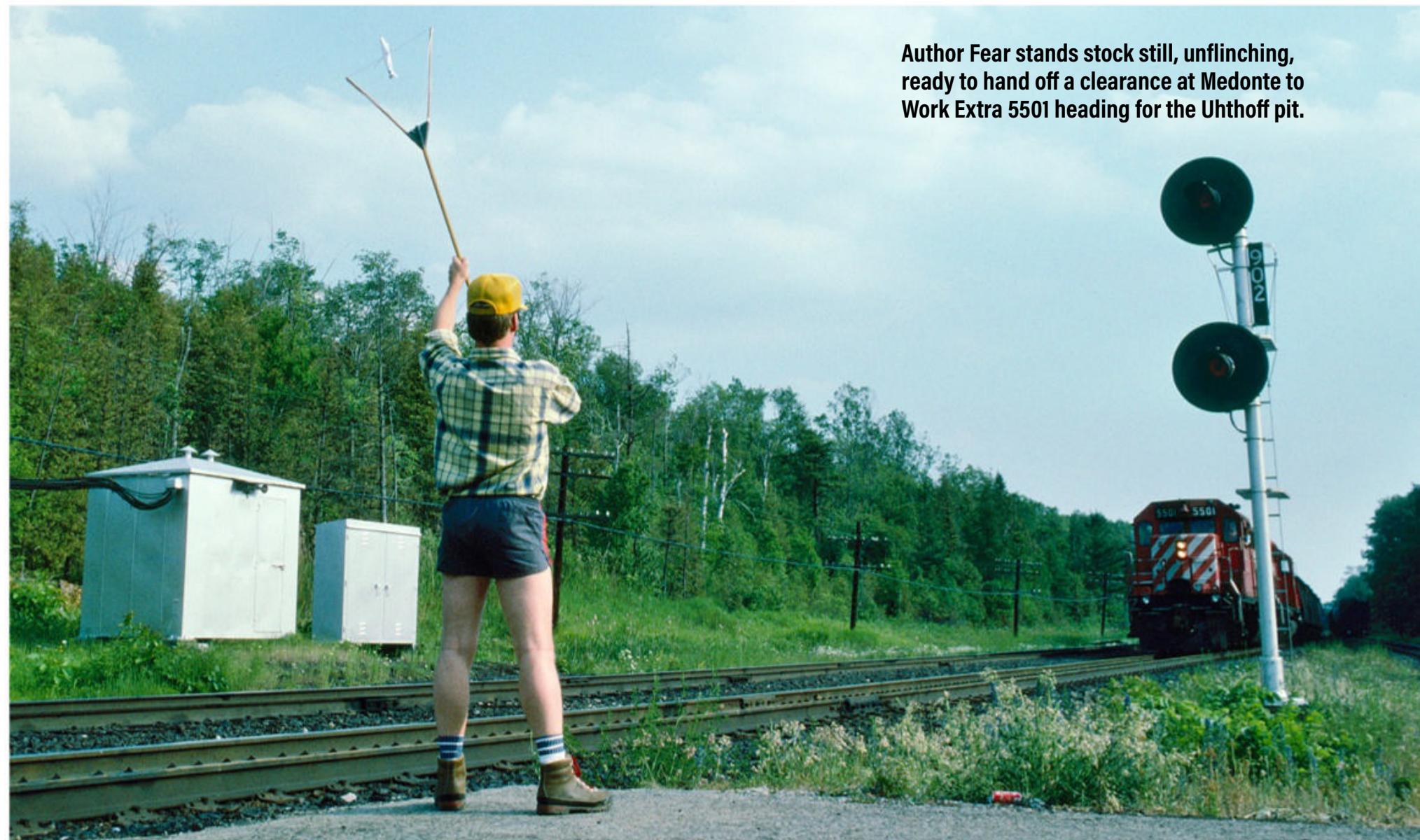
and Ron headed for the shop. We chucked many a day after that until I learned he had died in a tragic hunting accident.

To me, Ron was one of the good guys.

SOLITUDE AT MEDONTE

A spare operator might be posted anywhere on the Toronto Division where they were still required including Mactier, Medonte, Alliston, Smiths Falls, Toronto, and, of course, Havelock. I was sent to Medonte, a lonely outpost on the Mactier Sub near the tiny town of Coldwater. It

Author Fear stands stock still, unflinching, ready to hand off a clearance at Medonte to Work Extra 5501 heading for the Uhthoff pit.



had a particularly isolated feel to it, located in the heart of the snow belt south of Georgian Bay in the dead of winter.

At one time Medonte had been a busy junction where CP's flagship transcontinental train, the *Canadian*, stopped to receive and detrain passengers. The interlocking at Medonte controlled a portion of the Mactier main, access to the Uhthoff aggregate pit, and the branch toward Port McNicoll, which featured the largest grain elevators on the Great Lakes outside Chicago. Access to the CN diamond, which crossed the Mactier Sub through "my" interlocking, was granted automatically on a first-come, first-served basis and a CN move could block my request to route a train north or southward.

I was assigned midnights with instructions to sleep at the "Port" bunkhouse but instead chose to stay more comfortably at my mother's home some 35 minutes south of Medonte.

Quiet didn't fully describe nights at Medonte. On most midnight shifts I reported the passing of four northbound

trains with "OS Medonte" as they high-balled past, heading for western Canada. These hot 400-series container trains ran closely to a schedule, long before Precision Scheduled Railroading was ever conceived. Ordered two hours apart in Toronto, 401 passed Medonte around 11 p.m. followed by 403 a couple of hours later, train 405, and, when ordered, 407 about the time my shift ended. Southbound trains included 442 and 446 passing Medonte randomly through the night. It could be several hours before I was called on to clear a train through my limits via the aging interlocking panel, so I busied myself reading the rulebook, nosing around the backroom, and fabricating satirical newsletters, faxing them to the dispatching office in Toronto for their general amusement.

Part of the duties of a Mactier Sub operator was the copying and repeating of train line-ups. Train line-ups were used by many employees, particularly section crews. Using motorcars to access their part of the track, maintainers would put

on and take off when a train was expected based on the line-up. The safety of the section men depended upon their accuracy, and woe betide the dispatcher who left off an operating train, one expected to run, or worse, running a train not shown on the line-up.

If left off a line-up, a train would have to wait until a new line-up was broadcast, usually around 1 p.m. or when the previous one expired. Violation of a line-up generally meant the dispatcher was out-of-service pending an investigation. They were indeed scary.

Carefully, I copied the details of every line-up transmitted by the dispatcher and waited my turn to be called upon to repeat it. An operator was chosen at random to do so. Finally called upon, I began reading the details of the line-up. Pausing at one point, the dispatcher interrupted me — something wasn't right with my line-up.

"Are you reading off the form?" he asked.

I responded innocently, "Form? There's a line-up form? I haven't seen any."

"Yes," he replied. "There is a pre-printed form to copy a line-up. Call me if you can't find them. Mactier, your repeat, please."

So for some time, I was the butt of the joke, "Line-up forms? Where are those line-up forms?"

By 8 a.m. I was relieved by the day man, and the local Port Turn arrived bringing cars to the siding at Medonte. Traffic was light on that end of the branch, and access beyond Coldwater to Port and Midland required the use of a



CP's last grain train out of Port McNicoll, Extra 3064 with 79 loads, doubles up for departure (above) and passes the home signal coming off the Port McNicoll Sub at Medonte (below).



portion of CN controlled track.

Conversely, the Uhthoff quarry, 7.9 miles to the east of Medonte, was a major source of gravel and ballast for CP. The pit was served as required, usually on a weekly basis by the Uhthoff Turn out of Toronto. Inbound with empties, the train returned south with a string of 50 or more heavily laden hopper cars of gravel trailed by a manned caboose.

The Uhthoff Turn required a clearance into the pit as a work extra and south-bound as an extra on the Mactier Sub. In the dying days of hooped train orders, Medonte was my only opportunity to perform the rather steely task of delivering clearances. It required standing stock-still near the tracks with hoop raised as the train barreled toward me, unflinching as the crew snatched their paperwork on the fly. It was a taste of a bygone era.

One night, I had to "sink" a train for a meet in the siding across from my office. A clearance had to be hooped up, saving the dispatcher some time. Standing between the main and the siding with the hoop extended, I was recognized by the engineman, who shouted "Dougie, what are you doing here?"

"Hey, Kelly," I hollered back and flinched. He swatted at the hoop and missed. With the train slowing to crawl I ran after them, trying to deliver the clearance. Finally, Kelly stopped his train. During our brief ground-to-walkway exchange, I apologized, and he just laughed. Truly, railroading was about great people.

MOVING UP THE LADDER

During my brief career at CP, I bounced between Toronto and Medonte vacancies. Then, in July, an internal advertisement for dispatcher training was posted. It was a while before I heard anything, but I was eventually summoned to an interview at CP's Royal York Hotel in Toronto. There, I was grilled on why I wanted the position, or at least why I thought I wanted it. I waited several months to learn I was accepted, but continued to operate until slated to attend the month-long dispatcher training course in Montreal.

In November I reported to Montreal at "Thy Holy of Holies," Windsor Station. Operators from across Canada had been selected and billeted in a downtown long-term stay apartment building. My classmates included operators from Vancouver, Revelstoke, Calgary, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Kenora, Schreiber, Sudbury, Toronto, and, of course, Montreal. The Uniform Code of Operating Rules was drilled into us. We were trained in the



An operator works at the train order office in Medonte in February 1986, where Fear would later work. It was a lonely outpost on the Mactier Sub near the tiny town of Coldwater north of Toronto.

new Occupancy Control System/Manual Block System rules, rules for track occupancy, general operating instructions, computer-aided dispatching, and a host of other safety-critical documents and procedures. Weekends were spent as tourists in the city of Montreal enjoying the sites and the night life.

Graduating from CP's first class of what were now called Rail Traffic Controllers, we returned to our home terminals taking up the operator positions we left behind until called to "sit in." Each of us sat in at the various dispatching desks in our home terminal with an experienced dispatcher. "Learning the ropes" with each RTC, we were mentored and evaluated, gradually earning the right to dispatch solo with authorities issued under our own initials.

I was at last awarded with a permanent operator position. Having "won" midnights at Medonte I was still required to be in the field through the winter of 1988-89. During this time, I was fortunate to photograph the last grain train out of Port McNicoll.

As calls became more frequent for me to sit in at the various dispatching desks, I officially received my "initials" and became qualified to dispatch on my own. First was the Galt/Windsor desk, then the Mactier/North Toronto, and finally the Belleville/Winchester subdivisions. With the coming of the new Canadian Railway Operating Rules in January 1990, the craft of train order operator was gradually abolished. Hearing the call of a higher education, I returned to college and went on to a career at Bombardier Transportation as operations and maintenance planner.

I look back with great fondness at my photos of the men and women with whom I worked, and the great memories of a railway now so incredibly changed by technology. ■

DOUGLAS J. FEAR is recently retired from Bombardier's Transit Division. He plays French horn in several orchestras around Kingston, Ontario, where he lives with his beloved felines. This is his first CLASSIC TRAINS byline.

A DETAILED LOOK AT A LESS FAMOUS COUSIN OF THE 400

BY JERRY A. PINKEPANK

Photo by Ken Zurn,
collection of Louis A. Marre

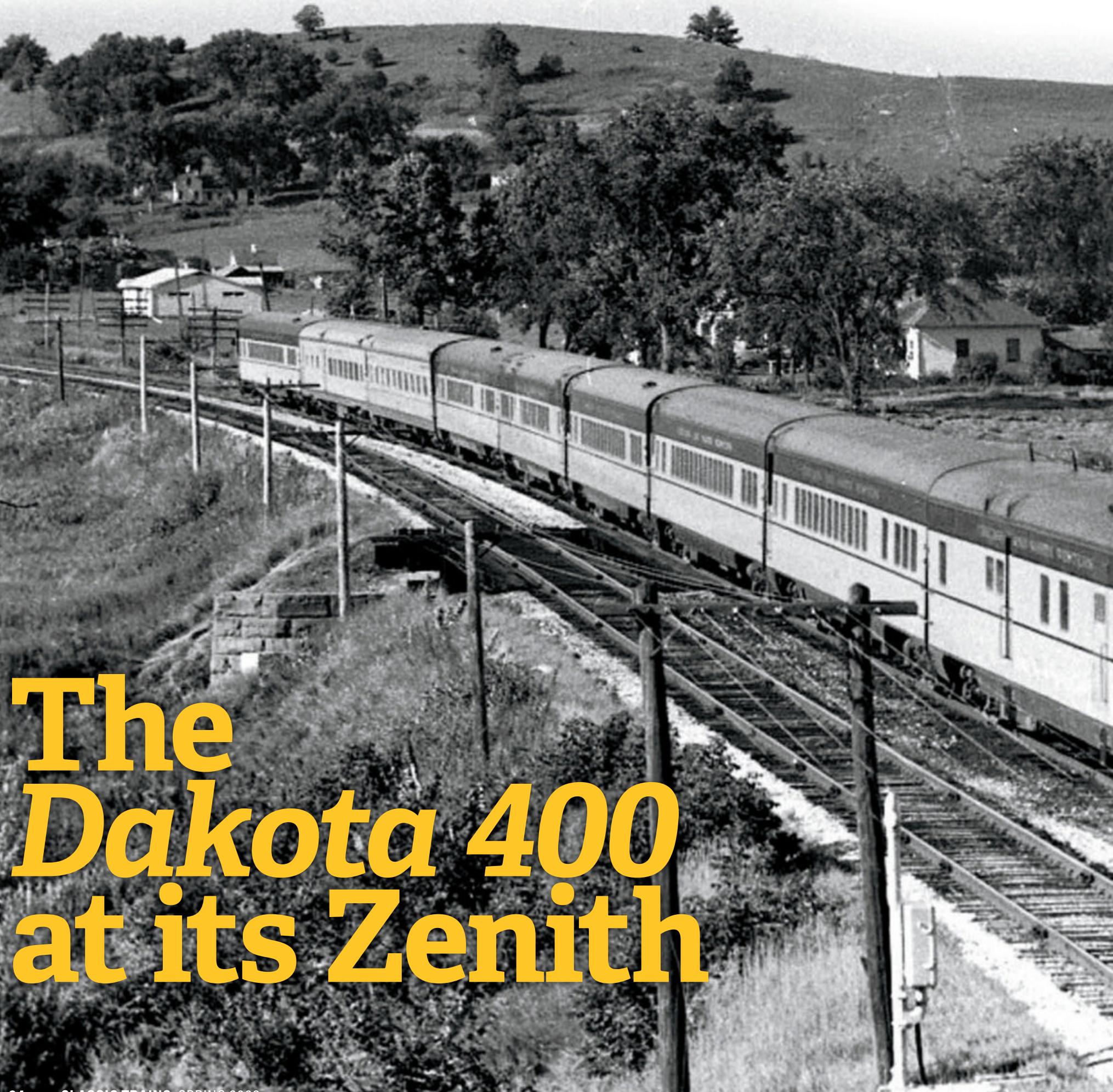
In 1935, Chicago & North Western inaugurated the 400 between Minneapolis-St. Paul and Chicago via Milwaukee. It was a heavy-weight train with a conventional steam locomotive, designed to equal the streamliner time of C&NW's competitors Burlington and Milwaukee Road.

The heavyweight, 4-4-2-powered *Minnesota 400* was added in 1936 between

Mankato, Minn., and a connection at Wyeville, Wis., with the original 400, which was streamlined and diesel powered from 1939. To match, from 1942 the *Minnesota 400* had brand new streamlined cars from the 400 pool, and two old 4-6-2s had been streamlined for the service. In April 1950 the *Minnesota 400* was replaced by the new *Dakota 400* running direct between Chicago and Huron,

S.D., via Madison and Beloit instead of via the connection through Milwaukee.

In this Aug. 12, 1954, photo to the westbound *Dakota 400* is seen approaching Elroy, Wis., running left-handed on double track in customary C&NW fashion. The first car is either 7600 or 7601, unique RPO-baggage-tavern-lunch counter cars built in 1941 for the *Peninsula 400* (Chicago-Ishpeming, Mich.) The



The *Dakota 400* at its Zenith

antenna on the roof is for an entertainment radio in the 16-seat tavern portion of the car. This car, with its nine lunch counter seats plus the ability to serve food in the tavern, provided the sole meal service west of Elroy, where the train departed on C&NW's South Dakota route via the Elroy-Sparta cutoff.

The rear car is a coach modified with a room for patients going to and from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. It's positioned in the

train for ease of switching at Mankato, where it will turn back. This accommodation is the remnant of a service formerly provided on a conventional train by a Pullman sleeping car equipped with a side door for stretcher cases.

Ahead of this coach is the full dining car; it and the parlor car ahead of it are C&NW cars in Union Pacific colors. They are from the Overland Route pool C&NW would exit the next year as UP changed to Milwaukee Road

to handle its passenger trains between Omaha and Chicago. The dining car will turn back at Elroy and the parlor car at Mankato with the Mayo-dedicated coach. In between are five 1947 coaches from the last batch of 400 pool coaches built.

A connecting train, popular with Black Hills tourists, operated between Huron and Rapid City, including a sleep-

ing car. Meal service ended in 1957 and the train was cut back to Mankato in 1960 becoming the *Rochester 400*. A single E8 (5025B, built August 1952) suffices because the unsignaled route west of Elroy on the Dakota line limited passenger trains to a maximum of 59 mph, compared with the 79 mph limit for most of the original 400's route. ■



BY DAVE STANLEY

Apple Hill RAILROADING



Above: No. 102 is eastbound negotiating an S-curve west of Camino in February 1978. The lumber load is destined for finishing at the mill. Above right: No. 102 eases downgrade just west of Camino with the first trainload of empty leased cars being returned to Itel in 1986.

For 85 years, the distant blast of a locomotive whistle could be heard echoing through forests of ponderosa and sugar pine towering high above the foothills that encompass the town of Camino, Calif. Nestled along U.S. Highway 50 at an elevation of 3,133 feet and located in the heart of El Dorado County, Camino (Spanish for "path" or "way") boasts a population of just less than 180.

Since 1964 it has been affectionately known throughout northern California as "Apple Hill" with its large number of fruit orchards and Christmas tree farms that dot the region and draw thousands of tourists annually.

While apples have been and continue to be a large revenue producer, it was logging of the El Dorado National Forest and a pair of associated lumber mills that sparked the construction of Camino's two railroads. The first was an extensive mill-owned 3-foot-gauge network bisected by the south fork of the American River and connected by a 2,650-foot cableway. The second was an 8-mile standard-gauge common carrier for moving finished lumber products to a Southern Pacific connection in Placerville.

TWO NORTHERN CALIFORNIA LUMBER SHORT LINES ARE LONG ON HISTORY



No. 102 works westbound between Camino and Smith Flat in June 1986 with some of the road's signature green boxcars. Three photos, Dave Stanley

**Michigan-California Lima Shay
No. 5 heads back to the mill for
another trainload of lumber.**

Michigan-California Lumber Co.



NARROW GAUGE AND THE CABLE

Early logging of the area, known as the Georgetown Divide, was managed by American River Land & Lumber Co., formed in 1889 with the intent of “driving” logs 40 miles downstream on the American River to a dam and sawmill located in Folsom. To access the river, a 2,900-foot chute to the water was built on a 30-degree incline from a point that would later house the north end of the cableway. With the unpredictable rise and fall of water levels, this method of operation was less than stellar and the company folded in 1899, its assets absorbed the following year by the El Dorado Lumber Co.

In 1901, the new owner began construction of a steam-powered, rough-cut sawmill nine miles north of the American River canyon at Pino Grande. A planing mill and box factory soon followed in Camino.

The building of its narrow gauge railroad also commenced, taking a meandering route nine miles north from Camino to reach the south cable site, negotiating grades as steep as 7 percent (later re-engineered to 3.5 percent). Nine additional miles of track were laid from

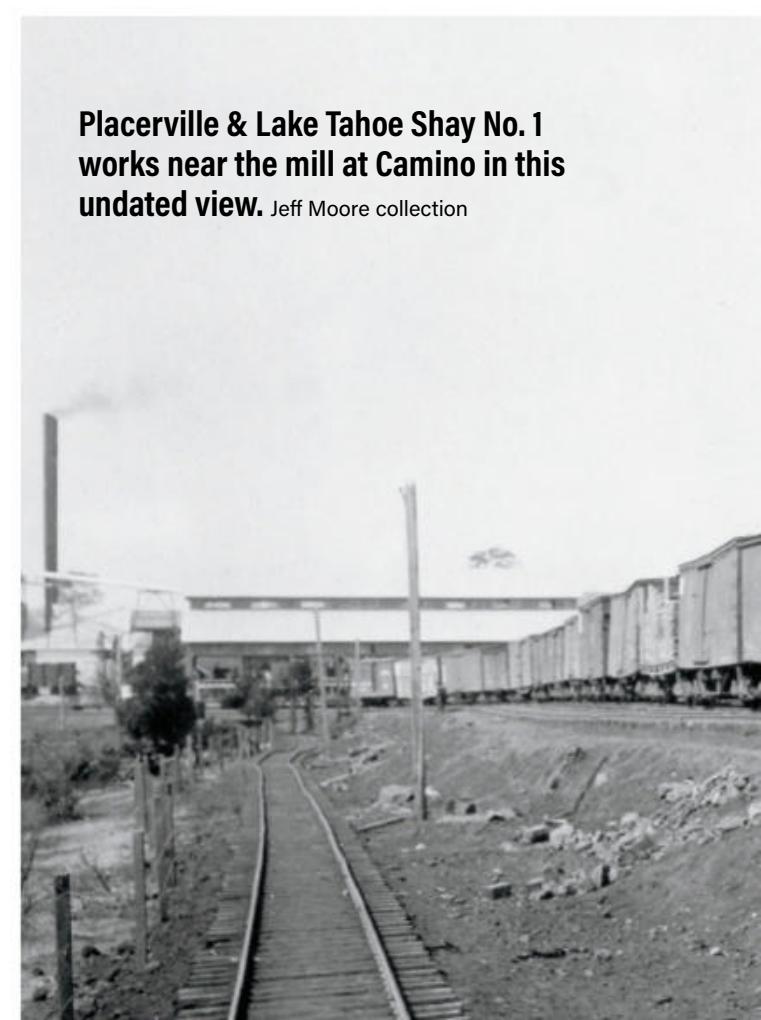
the north cable house (Cable Point) to Pino Grande, followed by another 15 miles that extended the line to Camp 14. As additional camps were established throughout the forest, dozens of new spurs were constructed.

Ownership of the two mills changed hands in 1911 and again in 1915 before new owner R.E. Danaher Co. sold all properties, including both railroad operations, to Michigan-California Lumber Co. in 1918. By now, more than 60,000 acres of timberland were under Michigan-California control and its narrow-gauge network expanded accordingly. Over time, the lumber company employed 19 wood-fired steam locomotives, including 12 two-truck and a trio of three-truck Shays, a Climax, a Heisler, and a pair of 0-4-0 tank engines. Those that survived into the 1940s were converted to burn oil.

By 1927, the cable system was showing extreme wear and was ripe for rebuilding. Construction of a newer, stronger cableway, located 40 feet west of the existing one, commenced in 1928 and was completed the following year. The cable's operating system was converted

from steam to electric power and was now capable of moving loaded flat cars weighing up to 58,000 pounds. Up to 40 cars a day traversed the gorge in a 26-foot-long carriage traveling 20 mph while suspended 1,200 feet above the

**Placerville & Lake Tahoe Shay No. 1
works near the mill at Camino in this
undated view.** Jeff Moore collection



American River. Over its 48-year lifespan, the cable hauled 25 billion board feet of lumber.

Mill operations changed dramatically after a lightning strike on March 17, 1949 resulted in a fire that destroyed the south tower of the cableway, rendering the line useless. The Pino Grande mill and drying kilns were shut down and all operations were relocated to the Camino plant. Logs that had been transported by rail to Pino Grande were now being trucked to Camino and by 1951 the narrow-gauge railroad was scrapped.

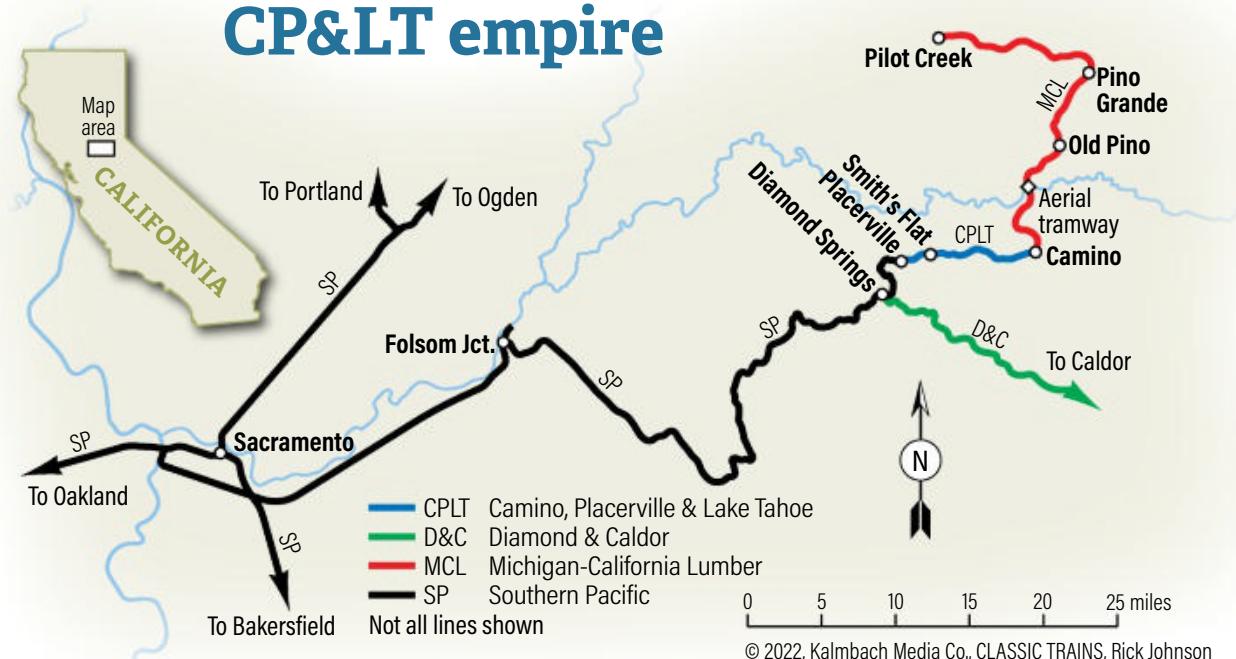
COMMON CARRIER

Grading of the standard gauge Placerville & Lake Tahoe Railway began in late 1903, a winding route that climbed 1,250 feet in just over eight miles. Seventy-five curves, eight timber trestles, and grades up to 5% were necessary to connect Camino with the settlements of Smith Flat and Placerville. With construction completed, rail shipments of forest products commenced shortly after the company incorporated on April 11, 1904. Newly acquired Lima-built three-truck Shay No. 1 provided the motive power for next 28 years.

Renamed the Camino, Placerville & Lake Tahoe Railroad following a foreclosure sale in 1911, any serious notion of building east over the Sierras to its namesake lake was soon cast aside.

Michigan-California assumed control of the Class III short line in 1918 with the lumber company's purchase of the Camino and Pino Grande mills. Passenger and mail service, which had begun in 1905

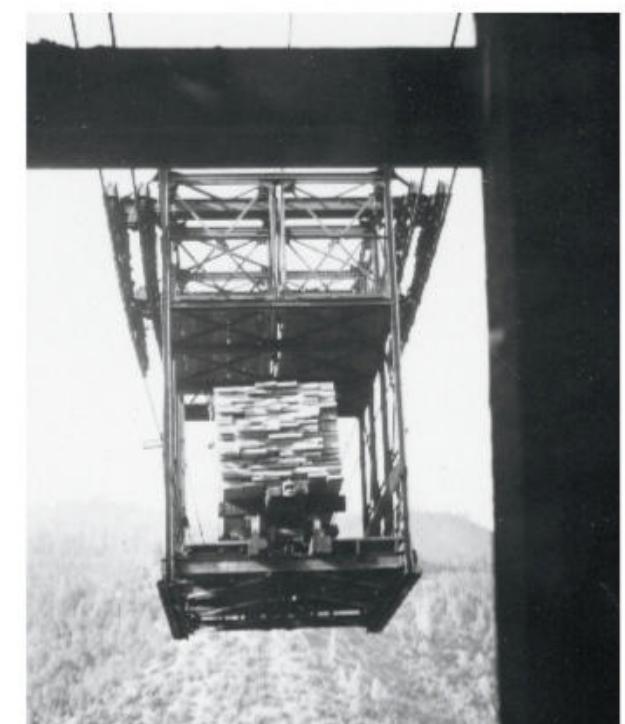
CP< empire



© 2022, Kalmbach Media Co., CLASSIC TRAINS, Rick Johnson



CP< No. 2 takes water at Blakely Springs. The property owner granted water rights to the company in exchange for a pass for himself and family, including future children! Mac Le Febre



The aerial cableway carriage is seen from the South Tower during a 1938 fan trip.

D. S. Richter, Jeff Moore collection



The victor meets the vanquished: GE 44-ton No. 101 works alongside Shay No. 2 in a November 1953 publicity photo. The railroad expected to cover the purchase cost of the diesel within six years, figured at a \$12,000 savings each year. The single diesel unit replaced two steam locomotives by working faster, especially on the grades up to 5 percent, and eliminating the need for water stops. The railroad would later acquire a second 44-ton diesel from Burlington Northern. The steam locomotive is preserved at Travel Town Museum in Los Angeles' Griffith Park; regrettably, Shay No. 1 was scrapped after dieselization. CLASSIC TRAINS collection



Before its transformation into CP< No 102, GE 44-ton No. 3, a former CB&Q unit, approaches the east crossing of U.S. Highway 50 in March 1972. Dave Stanley

with the construction of a home-built coach, was operated until 1937. Freight only afterwards, traffic levels grew substantially as World War II neared, with an average of 1,000 carloads of pine lumber departing Camino annually for markets around the world.

Other commodities hauled at varying

times included crushed rock for a nearby highway project and equipment destined for a hydroelectric project on the American River. Over the ensuing years, improvements were made to the physical plant including the replacement of several timber trestles with earthen fill.

A second three-truck Shay was added to the CP< roster in 1932. Purchased from Hammond & Little River Redwood Co., Lima-built Shay No. 2 served its new owner until dieselization of the line in 1953. That year, the railroad invested \$60,000 in the purchase of a new 44-ton diesel from General Electric. Numbered 101 and carrying GE construction number 31231, the 380-hp locomotive soon proved its worth to CP<, enabling the carrier to retire both Shays in 1955. The "One Spot" was scrapped that year while No. 2 found a new home in Los Angeles where it's prominently displayed today inside Griffith Park at the Travel Town Museum.

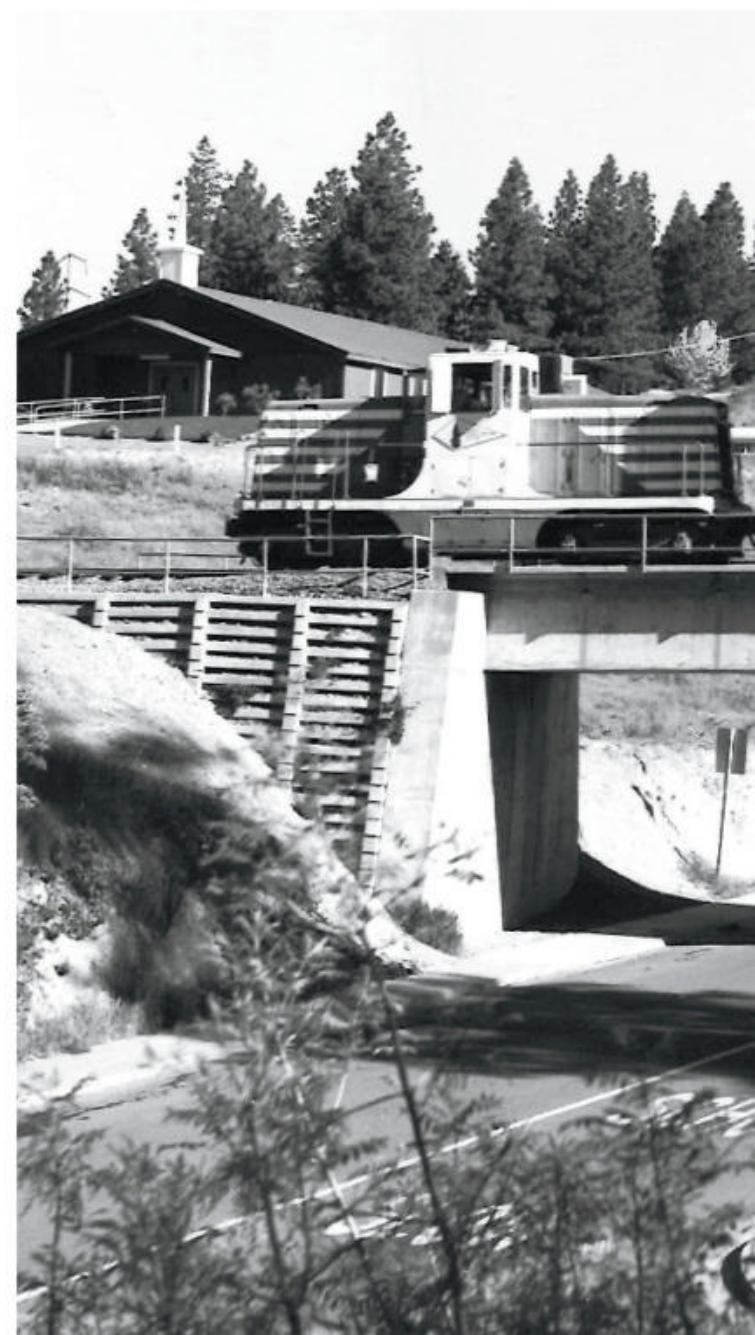
Also departing the roster with the arrival of 101 were the railroad's two cabooses, no longer required with the elimination of the fireman's position. The train crew could now ride on the head end of the train.

The addition of woodchip traffic about 1960 saw an increase in train tonnage. In his book "California's Lumber Shortline Railroads" author Jeff Moore

describes a scary incident that occurred in early 1961: The crew set out from Camino with three heavy woodchip loads. Partway down the grade the brakes failed, and the engineer threw the diesel into reverse in an attempt to stop the train. The woodchip cars continued pushing the small machine downhill, and the train crew bailed off. However, the runaway only progressed for a short distance before the three loads derailed off to the side of the tracks, leaving the locomotive on the rails. The diesel immediately started back up the hill, but was moving at a slow enough speed at the point it reached its crew to allow one of them to climb aboard and bring the locomotive to a stop.

One peril CP< crews faced was the crossing of Highway 50 at grade, twice, creating the potential for disastrous auto-versus-train collisions. This was especially true in later times with higher speed limits compounded by a steep descending grade for westbound vehicles. The sight and sound of skidding vehicles and brake smoke swirling around a short freight train easing across four lanes of asphalt was quite a spectacle!

In 1971, a second 44-tonner, the former Chicago, Burlington & Quincy 9106, was purchased from dealer Birmingham



Rail & Locomotive. Numbered as Burlington Northern No. 3 but still adorned in CB&Q dress, the 1941 Erie graduate was immediately pressed into service as CP<'s original 44-tonner 101 had become inoperable.

What followed was a "locomotive makeover." The engine hoods from 101 (which featured GE's newer design of front- and rear-end air ventilation) were removed and fitted onto the chassis of BN 3, replacing its less effective side-air ventilation system common on early GE center-cab diesels. This swap would help alleviate overheating issues on CP<'s demanding grades. Assigned number 102, the former Burlington unit was repainted into Michigan-California's traditional orange and black scheme, and some years later into the company's newer lime green and white colors.

To the average observer, the railroad's future appeared to brighten in 1977 when CP< entered the incentive per diem boxcar market. That year 50 double-door boxcars were leased from ITEL, followed three years later with a sublease of 50 additional cars from the McCloud River Railroad. The optimism, however, would be short lived as a severe recession and a shift to trucks would soon be at hand.

STEAM REVIVAL

For 13 years the hills north of Camino were devoid of the sound of steam railroading. That changed in late 1964 when Sacramento native Hal Wilmunder, a former SP fireman and a great-grandnephew of Mark Twain, came to town with his collection of narrow gauge equipment, giving birth to a new tourist line: The Camino, Cable & Northern Railroad. From a small depot and yard located at Larsen Drive and Second Street in Camino, and utilizing Michigan-California's abandoned roadbed, Wilmunder and his volunteer crew positioned new ties and spiked down rail. Just over a mile of track was laid, with aspirations of someday operating steam trains all the way to the edge of the American River canyon at the former site of South Cable.

CC&N's first train ran in November 1964 with a Porter-built 2-6-0, numbered 3. Passengers riding in open-air cars were treated to a short excursion through rolling hills and apple orchards for a mere \$1 ticket, with trains departing Camino every forty minutes. Six steam engines graced the CC&N roster including a Porter 0-4-0T, a Baldwin 4-6-0, a Baldwin 0-6-2T, a Heisler, and a three-truck Shay that previously earned its living hauling logs for West Side Lumber. A 47-ton GE



Camino, Cable & Northern conductor Fred Rothschild rides the footboard as former West Side Lumber 3-truck Shay 14 backs away from its train at Camino. Dave Stanley

center cab diesel and a small railbus were also used on occasion.

Hal Wilmunder never realized his dream of expansion, thanks to complaints from area dwellers, and Camino, Cable & Northern ran its final train in 1974. Through the years, his equipment found new homes, and all have been preserved.

The Camino, Placerville & Lake Tahoe soldiered on until 1986, delivering Michigan-California products to Southern Pacific and servicing the Placerville Lumber mill in Smith Flat as well. Unfortunately, deteriorating economic conditions within the lumber industry spelled doom for the short line, which made its final runs in June of that year. Scrapping of the line commenced soon thereafter. The Camino mill fell into disuse and the property was sold in 1994 to Sierra Pacific Industries, which made improvements and continued to turn out lumber until July 2009. Today the mill is gone, leaving behind only memories of a once proud operation and the railroads built to serve it.

The apples, however, are still as sweet as ever! ■

CP< 44-ton No. 102 crosses a bridge entering Placerville in April 1981. Ronald N. Johnson

DAVE STANLEY, creator and former producer (1978-1993) of the annual Winterail multimedia slide show, retired in 2015 after a 41-year railroad career. He would like to thank Pat Davis and Jeff Moore for their assistance with this story.

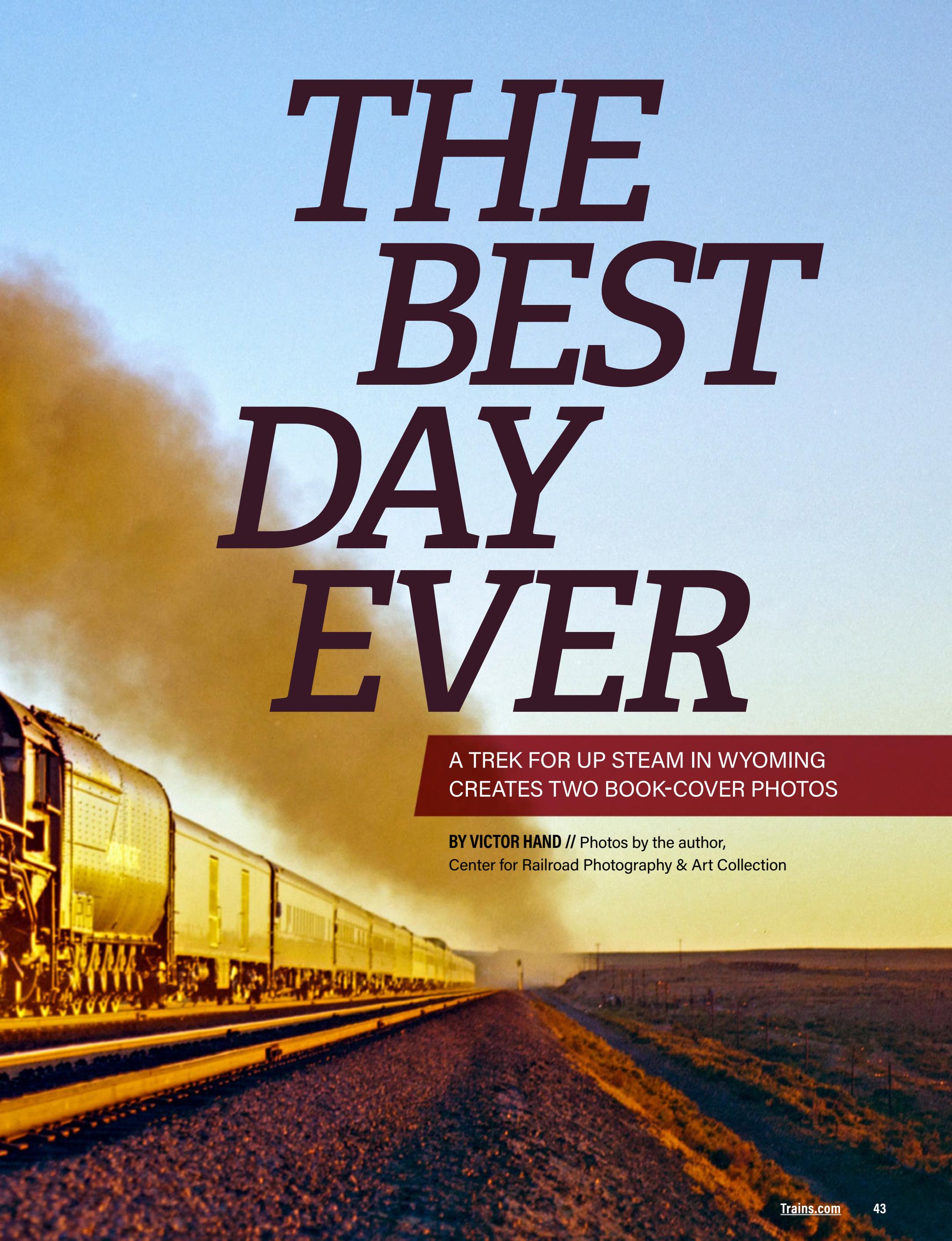


Archive Treasures

Union Pacific's last steam locomotive, 4-8-4 No. 8444, races east with a Shriner's special near Hadsell, west of Rawlins, on Aug. 31, 1968.



THE BEST DAY EVER

A large, dark-colored steam locomotive is shown from a low angle, pulling a long train of passenger cars. The train is moving away from the viewer along a track that cuts through a dry, brown, hilly landscape under a clear blue sky. The lighting suggests it's either sunrise or sunset, casting a warm glow on the train and the surrounding terrain.

A TREK FOR UP STEAM IN WYOMING
CREATES TWO BOOK-COVER PHOTOS

BY VICTOR HAND // Photos by the author,
Center for Railroad Photography & Art Collection

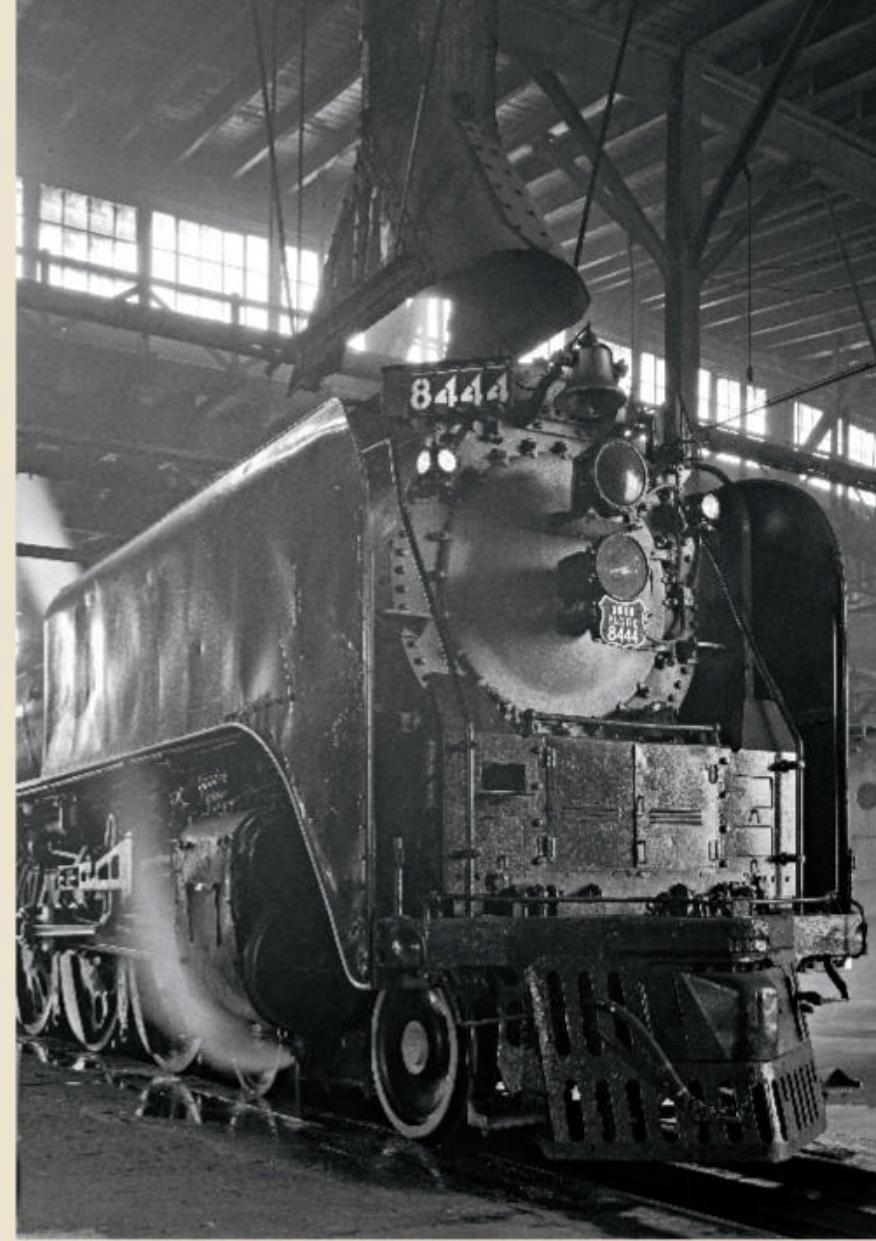
In late August 1968 I travelled to Colorado and New Mexico to photograph freight trains on Denver & Rio Grande Western's narrow-gauge line between Alamosa and Durango, Colo. I was travelling with good friend Don Phillips and we had an excellent two days photographing what turned out to be the last revenue freight trains between Alamosa and Durango [see "Photographing the Real Rio Grande Narrow Gauge," Summer 2020]. Usually the Rio Grande ran a train from Durango to Farmington, N.M., the day after a Chama to Durango train operated, but we were told there would be no Farmington turn the next day, so Don and I headed north to the Union Pacific main line.

Our destination was Green River, Wyo. We had information that led us to believe that Union Pacific had moved its last operable steam locomotive, 4-8-4 No. 8444, to Green River to power a special train of Shriners returning from a conven-

Three E8s lead train 106, the *City of Portland*, east through Point of Rocks. This was one of the first shots of the day waiting on the steam special.

Green River-bound





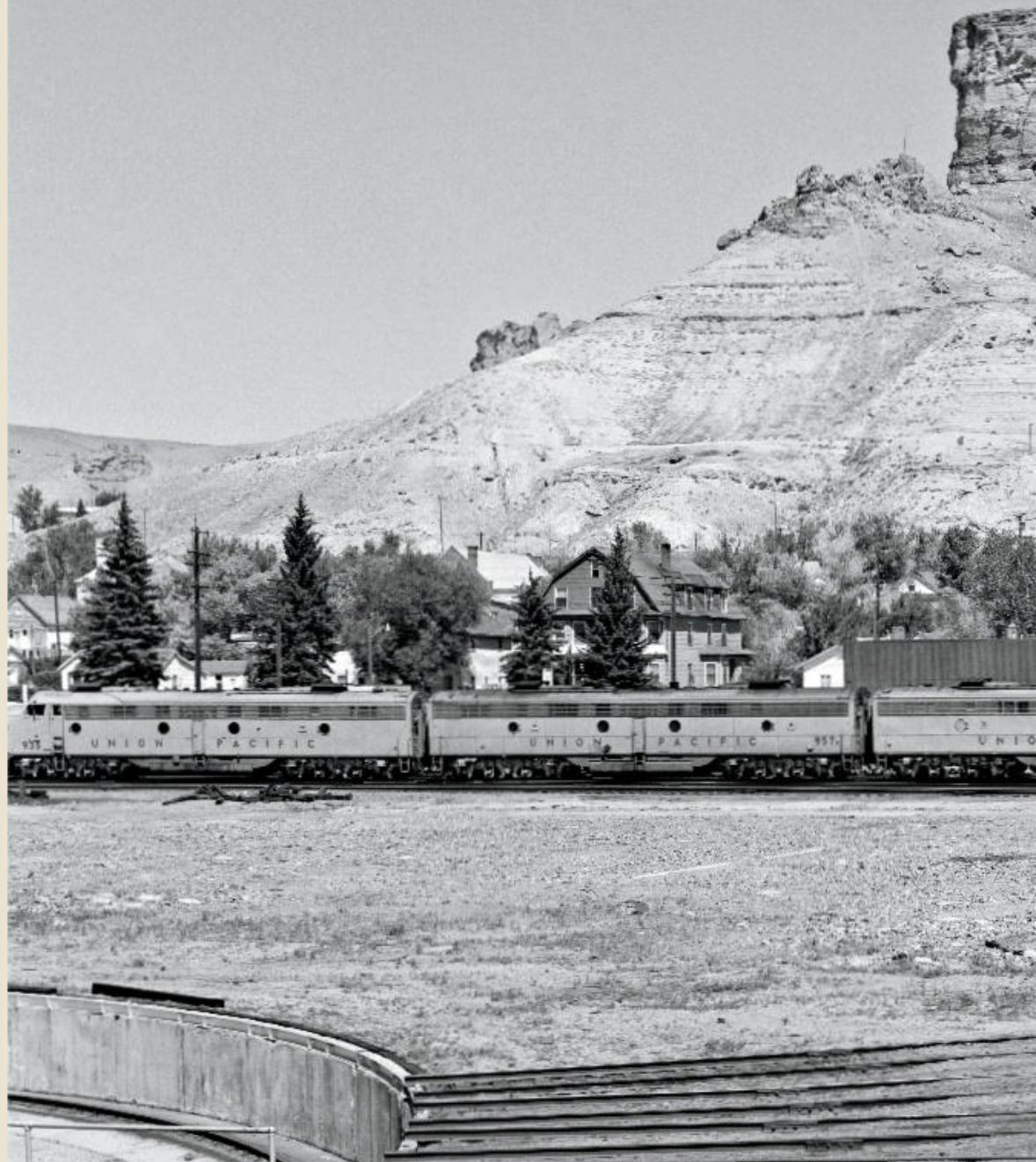
Left: UP 8444 rests under steam inside the Green River roundhouse prior to the special's arrival.

Far left: One of UP's 8,500-hp gas turbine-electrics gets an eastbound freight underway out of Green River. General Electric built 30 of these units for UP between 1958 and 1968. They remained in service until 1970.

Right: Train 10, the *City of St. Louis*, slows for its station stop at Green River with an A-B-A set of E units.

Bottom right: No. 8444 took oil and water at the Green River engine terminal. Facilities from the steam era were still intact at this time.

Below: Management looks over No. 8444 as she rides the Green River turntable prior to the special's arrival there.





tion on the west coast to Chicago.

It took most of the next day to drive the 382 miles from Durango to Green River. The morning of Aug. 31 found us in the Green River roundhouse. Sure enough, 8444 was there with no fire, but full of steam. The roundhouse foreman informed us the special train was due at Green River at 4 p.m., and the road foreman would be down at about 1 p.m. to fire up the big 4-8-4. The engine had been renumbered from its original number 844 in 1962 to make room on the roster for a new GP30.

The morning was spent checking out photo locations east of Green River. We figured our selected locations had to be well apart from each other, as the special train would be travelling at high speed. We went first to Bitter Creek, which was on a gravel road about 7 miles from the paved highway. We picked a good location east of Bitter Creek on the grade leading to Union Pacific's westernmost crossing of the Continental Divide at Tipton. UP's line crosses the Continental Divide twice in Wyoming.

We also photographed an east-bound four-unit freight led by a GP30 at Bitter Creek. We then retraced our steps 20 miles to Point of Rocks and selected a good location beside cliffs on a speed-restricted curve. We figured 8444 might put on a good show accelerating out of the speed restriction. While at Point of Rocks, we photographed a west-bound freight behind Chicago, Burlington & Quincy units, as well as train 106, the eastbound *City of Portland*. Then it was 40 miles back to Green River, where we picked a spot leaving town.

At the roundhouse, 8444 had been fired up and backed onto the turntable. The locomotive took fuel from an oil column that was still in use to feed UP's gas turbines. A traditional water plug was also still in service.

We still had more than four hours before the Shriners special was due. During that time, we photographed four westbound and three eastbound freight trains, as well as train 10, the eastbound *City of St. Louis*. Two of the freights were pulled by UP's massive 8,500-hp gas turbine locomotives. Other trains were led by GP30s, SD45s, and a

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double-prime-mover DDA35. We also saw a similarly-powered U50 in the yard.

The Shriners special left Green River about 30 minutes late, and we photographed it just east of the yard. On to Point of Rocks, 40 miles east, where we set up at our selected location. Much to our dismay, the train drifted into the curve and stopped. Doors opened, and white-jacketed Pullman porters put down step boxes. Union Pacific was staging a photo runby for the Shriners! But the passengers were not railroad enthusiasts; no one got off. The train backed up about a mile and made the most spectacular photo runby I have ever seen. There were only two photographers present to record the event.

Then it was on to our selected location 20 miles ahead at Bitter Creek, where 8444 put on a smoky show accelerating toward the Continental Divide 17 miles ahead.

On the gravel road out of Bitter Creek we experienced a flat tire. No tire was ever changed so quickly. Once back on the paved highway, we took off after the train at a speed well in excess of the posted limit. Within 40 miles we saw smoke ahead on the railroad and kept going. The sun was getting very low.

When we figured we were far enough ahead of the train to get to the tracks, we turned on a dirt trail that led to the base of one of the huge fills that Union Pacific built during the Harriman Era early in the 20th century. Out of the car, over a fence, and up the bank. I got to track level and saw 8444 coming at high speed. I had no time to raise the viewfinder on my Speed Graphic: I simply shot over the top of the camera body. Don was lying in the dirt a few feet behind me and missed the shot. His only comment was "that used to happen 100 times a day."

We followed the train into Rawlins. By this time, it was dark, and we took a standard night portrait while the engine was being serviced. We also photographed a westbound freight with a turbine.

I didn't have the equipment with me for night action photography, but we followed the train to Laramie just to watch. I can still see that yellowish-green headlight coming



Above: UP 52 is a U50 with two prime movers, essentially two U25Bs on a single frame. General Electric built 23 for UP between 1963 and 1965.

Above right: GP30 826 leads two cabless DD35s with a westbound freight passing the beautiful depot at Green River.

Right: GP30 861, two GP30Bs, and an F unit accelerate an eastbound freight out of Green River.







Left: The chase is on! 8444 leaves Green River with the eastbound Shriner's special train.

Right: UP's big 4-8-4 puts on a smokey display leaving Bitter Creek on the climb to the Continental Divide with the Shriner's special.

Below: The most spectacular steam locomotive runby that this author has ever seen took place at Point of Rocks.





No. 8444 gets a highball from the Conductor in the first vestibule after being serviced at Rawlins.



at me out of the Wyoming darkness and watching that long train of sleeping cars thunder across a grade crossing in the middle of nowhere.

Within a span of 2½ hours I took three action photos of 8444 that were used in books I have authored. One was used as the cover shot on "World Steam in Action" (Ian Allan, 1970), another was the cover photograph for the North American edition of "The Love of Trains" (Octopus Books, 1974), and the third was printed in a more recent effort, "A Steam Odyssey" (W.W. Norton, 2013).

Aug. 31, 1968: It was the best day ever. ■

VICTOR HAND has traveled the world in search of steam trains, photographing railroads in 53 countries on 6 continents. The Center for Railroad Photography & Art acquired his image collection in 2020. CLASSIC TRAINS' "Archive Treasures" series features images from the Center's growing collection.

CRPA CENTER FOR RAILROAD PHOTOGRAPHY & ART



Train time at Townsend

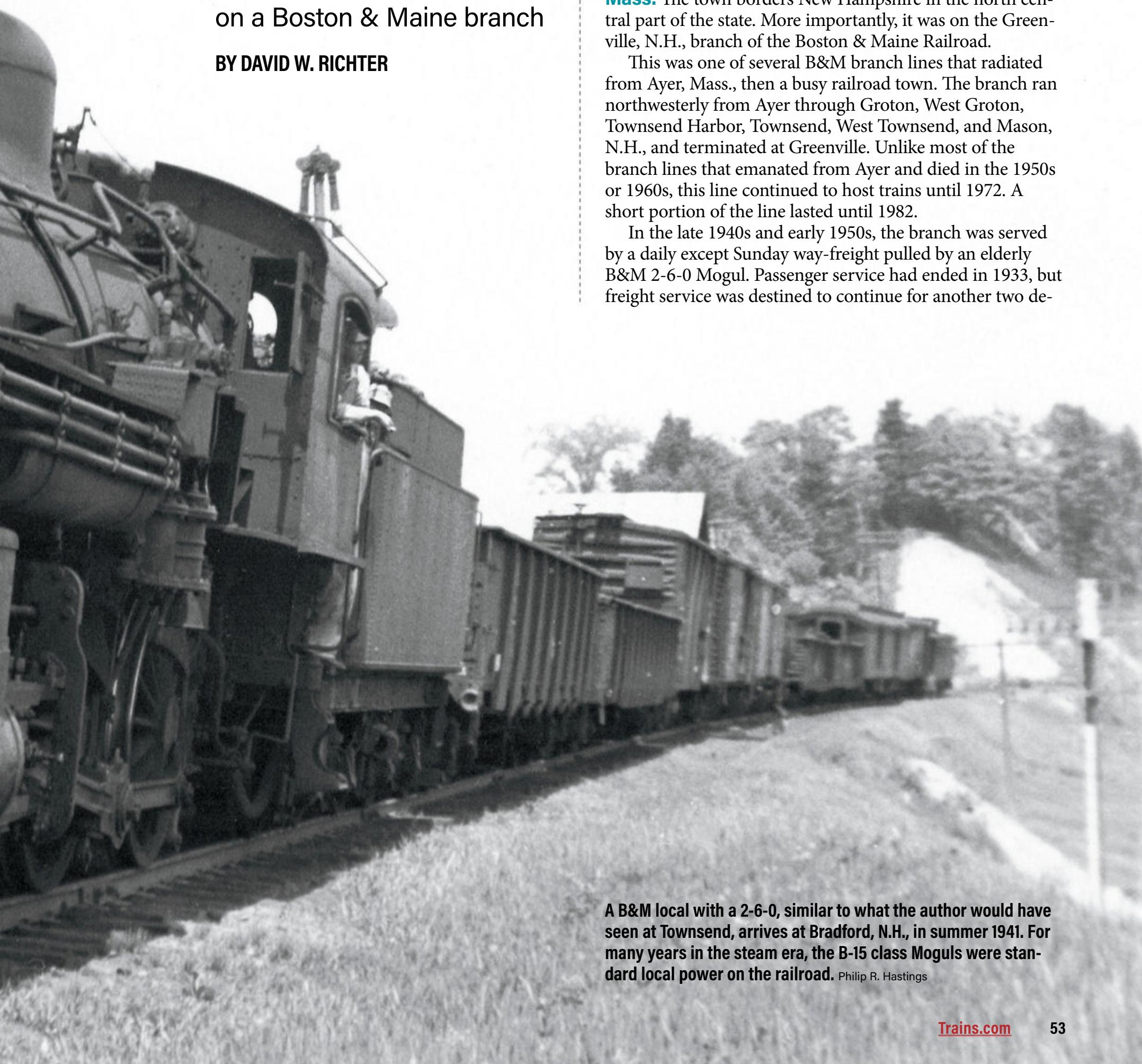
Memories of a simpler time
on a Boston & Maine branch

BY DAVID W. RICHTER

In 1948, my family bought a house in Townsend, Mass. The town borders New Hampshire in the north central part of the state. More importantly, it was on the Greenville, N.H., branch of the Boston & Maine Railroad.

This was one of several B&M branch lines that radiated from Ayer, Mass., then a busy railroad town. The branch ran northwesterly from Ayer through Groton, West Groton, Townsend Harbor, Townsend, West Townsend, and Mason, N.H., and terminated at Greenville. Unlike most of the branch lines that emanated from Ayer and died in the 1950s or 1960s, this line continued to host trains until 1972. A short portion of the line lasted until 1982.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, the branch was served by a daily except Sunday way-freight pulled by an elderly B&M 2-6-0 Mogul. Passenger service had ended in 1933, but freight service was destined to continue for another two de-



A B&M local with a 2-6-0, similar to what the author would have seen at Townsend, arrives at Bradford, N.H., in summer 1941. For many years in the steam era, the B-15 class Moguls were standard local power on the railroad. Philip R. Hastings



B&M 2-6-0 Mogul 1496 rests at Hillsboro, N.H., in 1948. The road had 137 such locomotives in the B-15 class, built 1903-1910. Charles B. Kolb

cades. A standard wooden B&M caboose brought up the rear of a typical train that was anywhere from one to 10 cars long. On some days, when there was nothing to pick up or set out in Townsend or beyond, the train didn't come at all. Presumably it turned back at some point short of town.

On summer days, or days off from school, we kids would often be there on bikes to watch the train do its chores. Crews were friendly and short rides in the caboose, or even a quick visit to the locomotive cab, were not unusual. The depot, occupied by a freight agent, was a few hundred feet south of the town center where the rails crossed State Route 13. The depot was only a half mile or so from my house, so visits were easy and often. Those were days when mother shooed us out of the house to get fresh air and only expected to see us again for lunch and supper.

The depot and nearby Fessenden's Mill were fascinating places to hang out. Train crews often spent considerable time switching a variety of sidings and spurs in Townsend. The main customer was the mill, which made wooden barrels. Incoming freight was mostly wood, which was milled into barrel staves, but also steel for barrel hoops. Several open warehouses, where wood was stored and aged, were served by sidings. The Mogul, its bell ringing, and with much hissing and chuffing, shoved and pulled cars onto and off sidings. The mill closed in 1960.

There was also a building supply dealer, with its cars of coal, lumber, gravel, and wallboard. Near the depot there was a team track where boxcars filled with various freight were

unloaded. Because of the orientation of most sidings, the train worked most of them on its outbound trip to Greenville. Less than a mile west of the depot the track crossed the Squannicook River on a low wooden trestle, a favorite fishing spot. The trestle was a handy way to cross the river and quite safe since there was just that single daily train. When the train

headed back to Ayer later in the day, it seldom paused more than briefly in Townsend, sometimes picking up cars it had positioned on its outbound trip.

As it headed toward West Townsend, the line crossed State Route 119 at an angle. There was a coal dealer there, with a short siding that held maybe two or three hoppers. In West Townsend, the tracks ran near a sawmill that at one time apparently was served by the B&M. By 1950, the siding was overgrown and had not been used in years. Beyond West Townsend the line ran through forest and made its turn north toward Mason and Greenville.

Greenville's claim to railroading fame was a long, high bridge just before the track entered town. It was the highest bridge in New Hampshire until being torn down in the 1980s.

Unusual events on the railroad drew kids, and sometimes adults, to the tracks. One was the arrival of huge steel girders for a replacement highway bridge over the Squannicook River. The girders arrived by train and were switched onto the team track. Because the girders were too long for a single gondola, spacer flats were on each end. A large crane lifted each girder off the gondola and onto a special truck for its final half-mile move to the river. I don't remember how many girders arrived, but over

Greenville Branch





Alco S-3 1184 rests at Northampton, Mass., in 1962. Similar end-cab diesels replaced the 2-6-0s on the Greenville branch. Louis A. Marre collection

a period of week or so, the railroad was kept busy spotting the newly arrived girders and removing the empty cars.

The grade crossing on Route 13 next to the depot had no warning lights or gates. There were just the crossbucks on each side. Each day the train slowly edged across the highway, its whistle blowing and bell ringing. Despite this clamor, one day a truck slammed into the locomotive. It must have hit hard because it derailed the locomotive. The truck had been towed away by the time I arrived, but the Mogul was sitting on the crossing, blocking the road, as men worked to re-rail her. Using a re-railer and wooden blocks, after some time, the old steam locomotive was successfully back on the rails. Undamaged, it continued its trek west after the hours long delay.

Around 1950, the crew told us that they were getting a new locomotive. I first heard the diesel horn while in school but didn't see the locomotive until a week or so later. We were at the depot as the train arrived with its air bell ringing and the rumble of the diesel engine. The new diesel was black and shiny and smelled of fresh paint. On the side of the cab was the famed Minuteman emblem in silver and red. The engine nose had red with silver outlined chevrons. As I look back, I think it was probably an Alco S3 or S4. It was a beautiful locomotive in my eyes. New. Modern. Clean. And, not surprisingly, the crew loved it.

As for Moguls and other steam locomotives, I never saw one again on the B&M. Fortunately, in 1952 my family moved to Illinois in a house adjacent to the Chicago & North Western main line to Milwaukee. There was steam aplenty on the North Western, at least for few more years. But that's another story.

The beauty of the B&M in Townsend was its down-home charm. The crews were friendly and encouraging. Neither they, nor police, nor parents made any move to stop us kids from hanging around the tracks. The excitement of train time,



A light unit rolls south through West Groton, Mass., just up from the start of the Greenville branch at Ayer, in the 1970s. B&M once had a tangle of branches from Ayer into New Hampshire. Ken Houghton

the acrid smell of coal smoke, the odor of creosote emanating from ties on hot summer days, the chuff of a small steam loco switching cars, the hiss of steam escaping, the smell of the inside of a well-worn caboose, and the hot, dirty cab of a steam locomotive — that's how it was in 1950 when the train came to Townsend. ■

DAVID W. RICHTER is a retired newspaper editor and journalism professor in Columbus, Ohio. His byline has appeared in numerous hobby and historical society magazines.



TWO TEENAGERS EXPLORE THE ERIE IN NEW JERSEY

It was an ordinary February 1958 day. Roger Cook and I, then and now friends and neighbors in Oradell, N.J., he 15 and I 14, were setting out on a modest hike of some 5 miles along the Erie Railroad's nearby Main Line. This was a redo of one just weeks earlier that had been compromised by heavy cloud cover. (In those distant days our film choices had been brilliant but slow Kodachrome, at

ASA 10 prone to blur, and faster but less pleasing and unstable Ektachrome.)

At the time we were dedicated fans of steam locomotives, which dominated our small model layouts but were fast disappearing from North American rails. Just the summer and fall before, we young teenagers had cut our teeth on Pennsy K4 Pacifics, H9 Consolidations, and B6 0-6-0s running their last miles on the New York & Long Branch and out of Camden,

N.J. At the end of the year, we'd gone by Pullman to Roanoke to photograph the wonderful abundance of steam still working there.

Occasionally we'd deign to shoot diesels, a somewhat disfavored pastime that we denigrated as just practice for future adventures with steam. The Erie was our "home road," courtesy of subsidiary New Jersey & New York Railroad, a commuter line serving Oradell. On that bright day

Trekking on the Erie



The photographers had just left the west-bound platform at Ridgewood to begin their walk when this eastbound freight rolled into sight, wreathed in brakeshoe smoke.

... ON FOOT!

BY KARL ZIMMERMANN // Photos by the author

with ankle-deep snow on the ground, my mother had driven us back to nearby Ridgewood, where we'd begin our trek north (railroad west) to Waldwick, the end of the shortest commuter district on the Main Line. I had my Zeiss Ikon 35mm camera, a gift from my parents the previous summer when we were in Switzerland. Roger had his Ansco 35mm. My camera's lens was sharper than Roger's, lucky for me. Also lucky for me as we

reminisce 64 years later about that day on the Erie main: it's Roger's memory that's sharper, much, filling in the gaps, many and large, in my recollections of a day that probably seems more important to me now than it did then.

Two kids deciding to slog through snow along miles of a busy multi-track mainline railroad right-of-way would no doubt raise eyebrows or red flags today, not to say attract the attention of the rail-

road police. But in 1958 apparently not we, nor our parents, nor the Erie Railroad found it alarming, and in fact we did it twice. Reconstructing the second venture, that sunlit day of our youth, has been a pleasant puzzlement, as it occurred long before I thought to take notes. Kodak's numbering of slide mounts is a help, but there are frustrating gaps—slides no doubt junked as too flawed to keep, at a time when the redemptive possibilities of

In Ho-Ho-Kus passengers and photographers on the west-bound platform were startled as a trio of RS3s honked by, most likely a power move to Suffern, N.Y.



This eastbound local, here crossing Ho-Ho-Kus Brook, will pause minutes later at the river-stone and tile-roof Ho-Ho-Kus depot.

Photoshop would have seemed like science fiction.

“History,” novelist Julian Barnes once wrote, “is that certitude produced at the point where imperfections of memory meet the inadequacies of documentation.” So, this is my history of that crisp, sunny day a lifetime ago.

Apparently, we got off to a late start since we missed the prime attraction of the *Erie Limited*’s 10:05 a.m. departure from Ridgewood’s handsome Mission Revival station (an odd style for New Jersey, though I’m sure we’d not thought that in 1958, nor knew it had been built in 1916).

Our walk touched three stations — Ridgewood, Ho-Ho-Kus (the railroad used the hyphenated version of the name), and Waldwick — all attractive and worthy of inclusion in our photographs. Unfortunately only the river-stone Ho-Ho-Kus depot is there, and in a backhanded kind of

The Erie in New Jersey



The budding photographers had admired the pan-shot artistry of Robert Hale in "The Age of Steam." This homage was taken of a westbound local nearing Waldwick from a high vantage point, giving the viewer a feeling of speed and power.

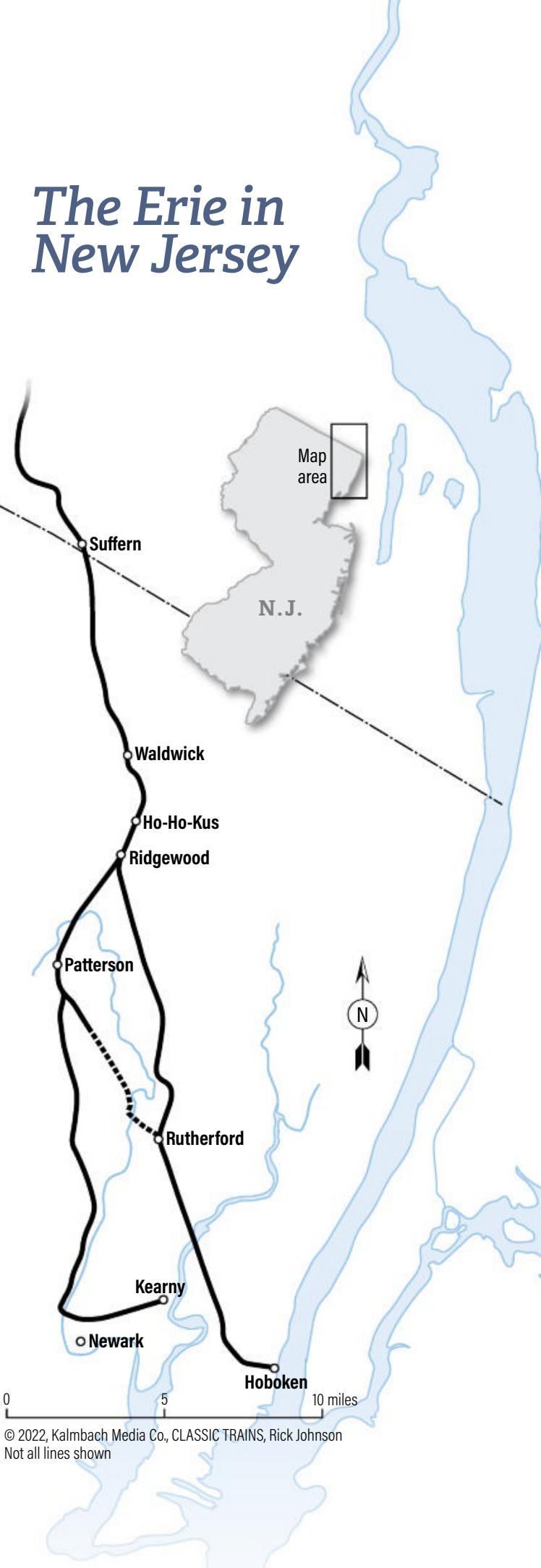


A westbound local with a ubiquitous Alco RS3 navigates snowy "Collins Curve" in Waldwick, a location popularized by local photographer and Erie dispatcher Bob Collins. Note the baggage car on the rear. The view remains popular with photographers in the 21st century.

way, in what we would learn to call a “grab shot” from the westbound platform of an unexpected light power move and distantly in the late afternoon. Lucius Beebe and Charles Clegg’s “The Age of Steam” was my bible, and though many of its images show context, pictures generally were locomotive-focused, and we certainly were, to a fault.

We stepped off the north end of the Ridgewood station’s westbound platform

and immediately encountered an eastbound mixed freight behind three EMD GP7s and an Alco RS3, slowing as it passed through the station on its way to Croxton Yard. Then we headed toward Ho-Ho-Kus, about a mile-and-a-half away, walking on the east side of the tracks and being careful to skirt a slotted drop in a siding where a hopper could deliver coal to a dealer adjacent to the station. On the westbound platform at Ho-Ho-Kus, we



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Not all lines shown

and two passengers waiting for a local were surprised when multiple light RS3s blew through, perhaps headed north to Suffern, another commuter endpoint, after being serviced in Hoboken.

By now it was early afternoon. Since the bright sun was swinging west, so did we, crossing over by road at the Ho-Ho-Kus station, and we’d stay on that side, sun to our backs, for the rest of the day. Where Ho-Ho-Kus Brook scooted under

Waldwick is the end of the shortest commuter district. On this weekend afternoon, Alco power both grand and workaday rests before heading back to Lackawanna's Hoboken Terminal, which just recently had become the eastern endpoint of Erie varnish.



The photographers remained on the sunny side of the tracks — their boot-prints are visible in the snow — for the walk back to Ho-Ho-Kus and Ridgewood. Judging by the baggage car in long-distance colors, this train was likely made up at Port Jervis.

the tracks, we climbed a hill to shoot an RS3-powered local. Since they were the coin-of-the-realm here and on the New Jersey & New York, RS3s loom large in my recollections.

The “Age of Steam” holds some skillful pan shots, and for a rookie I did a fair emulation of that technique on the next train,

then captured another westbound on the S-curve leading into Waldwick from the Wyckoff Avenue Bridge. This spot was so perfect that it might have been designed with train photographers in mind. We later came to know it as “Collins Curve,” informally named for Erie dispatcher and tireless photographer Bob Collins who lived nearby and often shot there.

In the Waldwick yard a pair of RS3s (including the one I’d panned just earlier) and an Alco PA posed for us, but missing from our pictures are wooden tower WC and the screamingly photogenic Victorian depot from 1887 (both of which survive today as impeccable preservations).

From there we headed back, again walking along the west side of the tracks. We caught an eastbound with a baggage car in long-distance-train colors, then ended the day with two westbounds. The first was a two-car train over-powered with a PA, a plum for us which we nailed in a small patch of late sun (which we’d staked out) that snuck over the cliffs just north of the Ho-Ho-Kus depot. We ended the day with an RS3 leading three coaches, Erie’s idiosyncratic heavyweight Stillwells like all those we’d photographed, one with unmodernized arched windows.

Back in Ridgewood we clambered up



As the short day waned, sunlight became a touch-and-go challenge, especially since cliffs rose to the west at Ho-Ho-Kus. Happily, an Alco PA with a pair of Stillwell coaches appeared just in time to be framed in a postage-stamp-sized splash of sunshine.



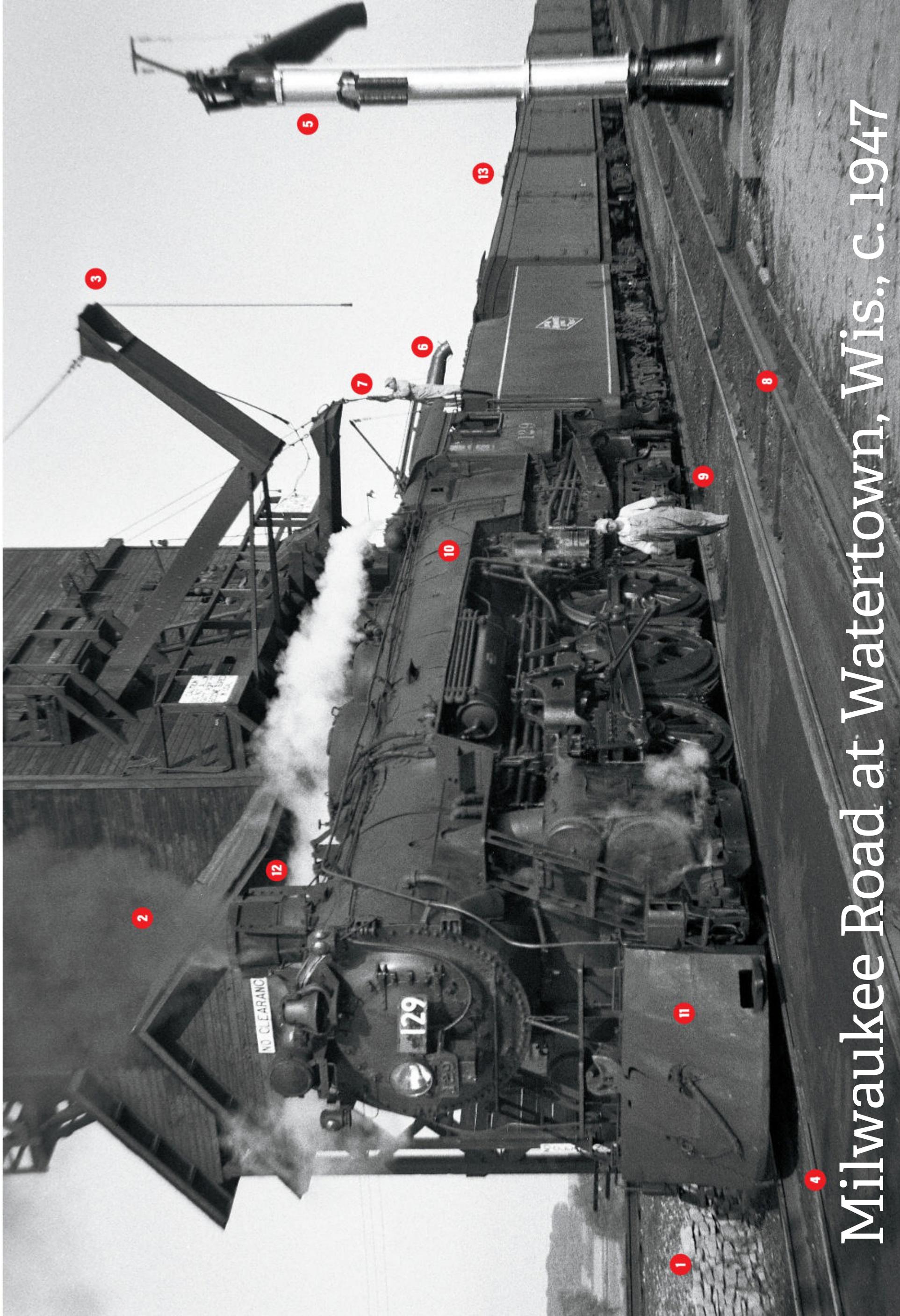
One last shot of the ubiquitous Alco RS3s and even more ubiquitous Stillwells, made just north of Ridgewood, brought our day trackside to a close.

onto the eastbound platform and spotted my mother in our blue Packard, waiting patiently to drive us back to Oradell. So ended what at the time no doubt seemed an ordinary day, nothing special, just practice shooting for days of steam in Canada, which indeed would come, in just a few months. But today, as

Roger and I flip through these images and reminisce, the day seems anything but ordinary. ■

KARL ZIMMERMANN is a prolific railroad historian, author, and photographer with bylines in CLASSIC TRAINS, TRAINS, and many other publications.

What's in a Photograph?



Olympian Hiawatha's second section, hurrying express refers west, takes coal and water

BY JERRY A. PINKEPANK // Photo collection of Louis A. Marre

Watertown, Wis., is 46 miles west of Milwaukee. The lighting and background foliage makes this a late afternoon photo in summer. The photographer is unknown and the negative was given a plainly wrong date of 1953 — by that date these engines were in local and work train service and filthy. However, various clues say early postwar era. All cars in view are express refrigerator cars designed for passenger train speeds and this is a passenger engine not carrying signals and running on the approximate time of train 15, the westbound *Olympian Hiawatha*. It entered service June 29, 1947, and left Milwaukee at 4:45 p.m. Until that date the only afternoon passenger train west from Milwaukee was no. 101, the *Afternoon Hiawatha*, which departed at 2:15 p.m.

could serve two routes. Concrete or steel coal docks generally replaced timber ones in the 1920s, but the cash-strapped Milwaukee needed to economize. "Railway Engineering & Maintenance Cyclopedia" shows treated timber coal docks advertised as late as 1945.

3 Madison main's coal chute

Locomotive 129 is coaling on a track that was between the mains but reached both, so the Madison main's chute needed a long reach.

4 Shared coaling track

There were crossovers immediately east and west of the coal dock on the St. Paul main so this between-mains track could be conveniently reached. There was also a Madison line connection east of the east crossover so Madison

moves could be made without conflict. The Milwaukee had a five-stall roundhouse east of the Madison main line connection, so there were also local light engine moves that could stay off both mains while coaling and watering. It's not evident from this photograph if there's a coal chute or water plug on the St. Paul main. This train would probably have stayed on the other side if there were chutes and water there. Note that there's no sanding arrangement visible; this configuration was common on mainline coal docks as engines could run a lot farther between sandbox refills than they could between coal and water stops.

2 Timber coal dock

The spacing of this facility 131 miles from Chicago, on the main line rather than at an engine terminal, shows it was sited to support extended engine runs between Chicago and the Twin Cities. Newspapers of 1930 state that it was the introduction of the F-6 locomotives (see item 10) that resulted in the Milwaukee ceasing to use several relays of locomotives on this run and that only one intermediate coal and water stop was needed, so it's likely this structure dates from 1929. The divergence of the Madison route made this a good choice for the location as it

7 Handling coal chute, watering
they were renumbered in order as 125-138 in 1938. No. 129 was retired in December 1953.

11 Sheet steel pivot
This retrofitted 1936 feature, with retracting coupler, was duplicated on class S-2 4-8-4s delivered in 1937-38; it reduced the risk of spearing a motor vehicle in a grade crossing collision, sometimes resulting in derailment.

12 Retractable stack extension

13 Express refrigerator cars
Railway Express AAR class BR cars from series 300-449 (wood body, steel underframe).

8 Main line to Madison

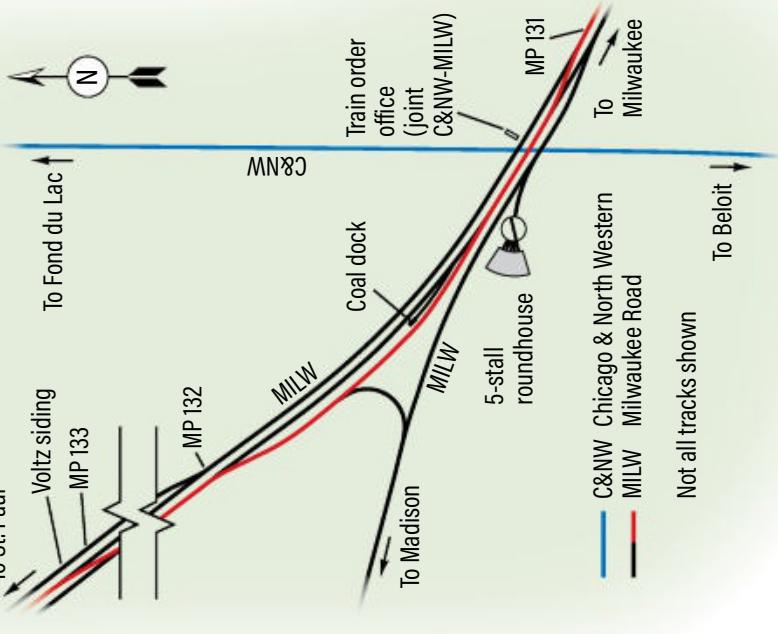
9 Engineer checks rod bearings
Taking a glove off, he would feel if any bearing was running hot. This class of engines on the Milwaukee had mechanical lubricators and Alemite fittings — lubricated using an air-operated grease gun — and with the local roundhouse crew handy and knowing that the engineer would be doing this, they were probably equipped with an Alemite gun if their response was needed.

10 Class F6 4-6-4 129

The railroad received 14 F-6s January to March 1930, preferring to call them Baltics rather than Hudsons. This was because the Milwaukee's people felt that would have had the first 4-6-4s except for their 1925-28 bankruptcy that let New York Central and Alco beat them to the punch on a design already worked out with Baldwin: cylinders 26x28 inches, drivers 80 inches, boiler pressure 225 psi. Delivered as Nos. 6400-6413

5 Madison main eastbound water plug

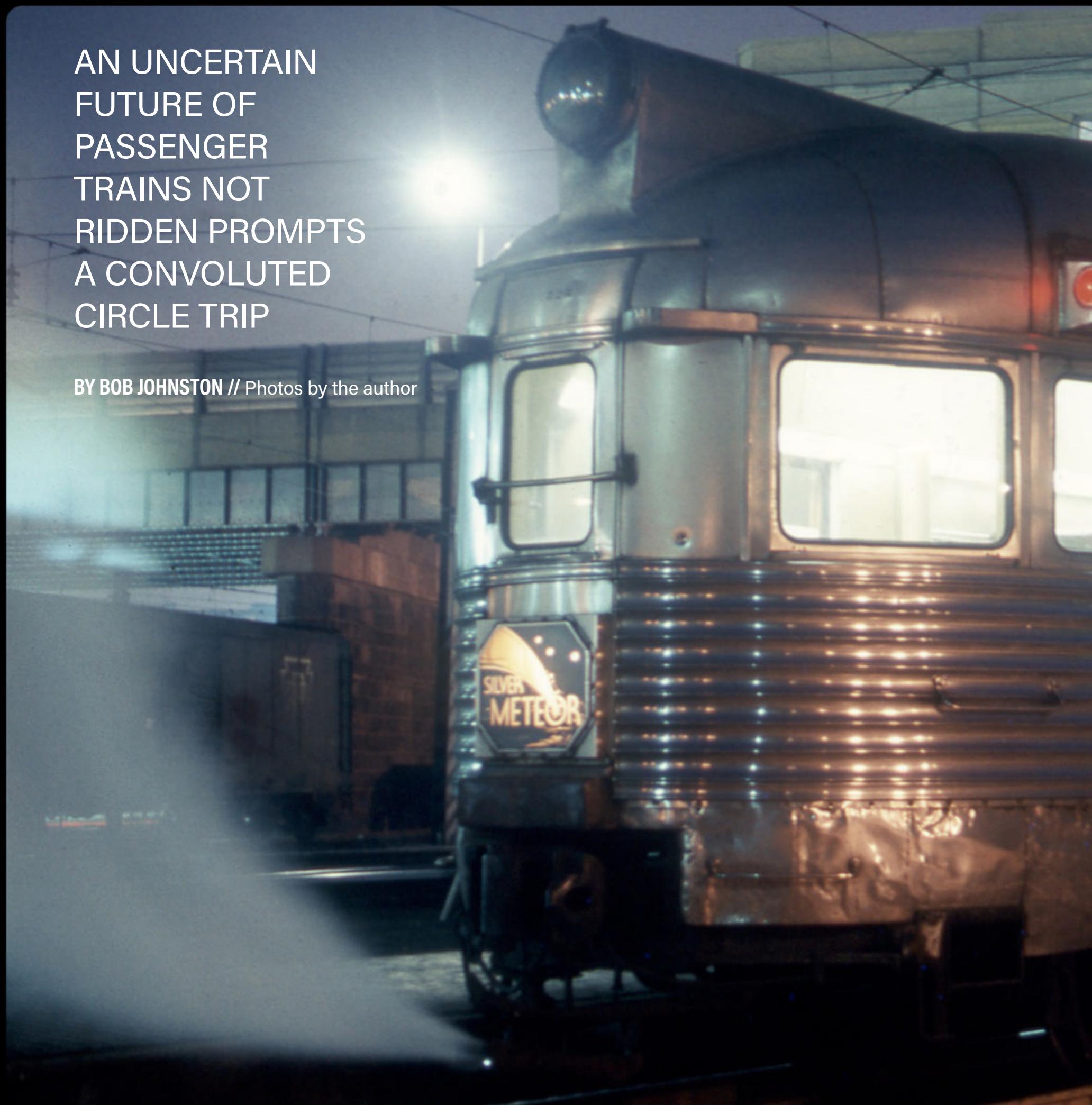
Water plugs at main line coal docks were often positioned as we see here, so that it was not necessary to double spot and coal and water could be taken simultaneously.



Southern

AN UNCERTAIN
FUTURE OF
PASSENGER
TRAINS NOT
RIDDEN PROMPTS
A CONVOLUTED
CIRCLE TRIP

BY BOB JOHNSTON // Photos by the author



Swing to



to
op
∞

“You make work for me!”

The veteran attendant in the *Silver Meteor*’s glass-topped Sun Lounge enforced a time-proven custom: keep the car’s window shades down halfway.

But that didn’t suit this enterprising young photographer determined to capture the one-of-a-kind ambience created by all that glass as the sun was rising, so the shades had to go up.

“Don’t worry, I’ll put them where you had ‘em,” I shouted.
“Hey, there’s no one in here yet.”

The round-end observation car with a tailsign was a rare breed indeed on a frosty Jan. 31, 1968, as the southbound *Silver Meteor* prepares to depart Washington Union Station.



Capturing the ambience of the *Silver Meteor*'s unique Sun Lounge required the window shades to be raised in the early morning hours of Feb. 1, even if it was foggy. Switching to the Florida East Coast at Jacksonville meant there wouldn't be an opportunity to wait for better light.

He gave me a dirty look, but about 10 minutes later — somewhere between Savannah and Thalman, Ga., on the *Meteor*'s original Seaboard Air Line route from New York to Miami — I returned his shades to half-staff. By then, of course, he'd disappeared.

It was impossible to know on a February 1968 morning what would unfold in the months ahead, but for anyone who had grown to appreciate passenger trains, there were just too many ominous signs in the immediate future to let an extended weekend break after college exams go to waste.

South from Baltimore

The closest I had come to riding the *20th Century Limited* was the foggy memory of a trip from New York to Chicago on the *Commodore Vanderbilt* when I was 6. After years of "someday" procrastination, the *Century* was history. And it was already too late to plot one last trip from New York on the all-Pullman *Broadway Limited*; that service ended on Dec. 15, 1967, the day it had become mongrelized with the Pennsy's *General*.

Secondary trains all over the country were dropping like flies as most Railway Post Office contracts were canceled the previous year. A sense of urgency to

experience as much variety as possible collided with inevitable time constraints.

The *Silver Meteor* turned out to be a prime choice. Every Seaboard Coast Line New York-Florida flagship was a class act, but the *Meteor* was blessed with the unique Sun Lounge 5-double bedroom sleeper, plus the only remaining round-end coach-observation car in the East

(and one of few trains to still have them in the country).

Baltimore Penn Station provided an appropriate sendoff, with an all-business gate agent proudly lording over a meticulously lettered arrival-and-departure chalkboard. Feeling the vibration of the concourse when trains rumbled underneath always got my travel juices flowing. The night of Jan. 31, 1968, was no exception when I boarded the *Meteor* there.

During the power change from a Pennsy GG1 to a duo of former Seaboard Air Line E8s and an ex-Atlantic Coast Line E7 at Washington Union Station, there was enough opportunity to capture the obs bathed in steam, then hop back aboard to watch the brightly lit Jefferson Memorial recede as we crossed the Potomac. Unlike most other round-enders, the *Meteor*'s functioned as a coach-lounge, dating from the train's introduction as an all-coach streamliner in 1939. It thus encouraged an egalitarian vibe rather than the snooty atmosphere that often imbued lounges elsewhere.

Yet it was hard to beat the stylish mid-train Sun Lounge not far from my roomette, one of the reasons it beckoned first thing in the morning. OK, the furniture was reminiscent of a 1950s living room, but the driftwood table lamps and



It wasn't just FEC's palm tree logo adorning the stainless-steel base of a typical lounge car drink holder, but just think of the stories all those scuff marks could tell!



Trains listed on the chalkboard at Baltimore's Penn Station on Jan. 31, 1968, include the *Silver Meteor*, *Champion*, *Broadway Limited*, and *Northern Express-Penn Texas*. Good penmanship is a must for this PRR usher, who at midnight would become a Penn Central employee.

plentiful Florida landscape images helped raise anticipation for the warm climate to follow. Preparing travelers for their destination is what a proper onboard experience should do, right? Most exhilarating was seeing trees rush past both sides of the car *and* overhead.

Too bad a sad ghost of streamliners past awaited at Jacksonville Union Station. There Florida East Coast's lone remnant prepared to make its daily-except-Sunday trek through Henry M. Flagler's legacy communities. Florida had mandated the railroad re-establish service that had been abruptly cut following a January 1963 strike. Because courts ruled FEC's corporate charter stipulated both coach and "first class" accommodations should be offered, the road dutifully tacked an observation masquerading as a parlor car behind a coach, equipment that could have once run on the *East Coast Champion*.

I hoped a quick round-trip to Daytona



Florida East Coast's southbound train is ready to leave Daytona Beach, Fla., on Feb. 1, 1968, is the last remnant of the railroad's once-proud streamliner fleet. A judge had ordered the Jacksonville-North Miami service to resume, but the trains were dropped later in 1968.

Beach would somehow reveal fragments of the FEC fleet's heritage and character. It did — on the base of stainless-steel art deco drink holders positioned in the aisles of the southbound's square-end *Lake Okeechobee* and northbound's round-end *Saint Lucie Sound*.

The heavy bases were scuffed and scarred after who knows how many trips north and back again. The distinctive FEC palm tree logo reflected a time when railroads competed for business by burnishing their corporate image. Seats surrounding those drink holders were empty, but one could imagine a car full of animated conversation in the row of chairs over there, and maybe someone over here pensively looking out the rear.

That was as close to FEC's glorious past as I would get.

Back at Jacksonville, the *Gulf Wind* would soon depart. Unlike its station compatriots, the transportation it furnished across the Florida Panhandle and along the Gulf Coast to New Orleans had never been flashy.

Here was a surviving specimen of an all-purpose, full-service link between mid-size cities and small towns: A combination RPO-baggage car; coaches; a lone Jacksonville-New Orleans 6-section, 6-roomette, 4-double bedroom Pullman; and a diner, providing dinner out of Jacksonville. It would be dropped at Chattahoochee, Fla., to be picked up by the eastbound morning *Wind*.

Why Chattahoochee? That was the corporate ownership demarcation between the Seaboard Air Line and Louisville & Nashville, which had cooperated in running the train. It was ACL dining car *Fitzgerald* that did the honors this night. I had the steak.

The *Gulf Wind* combined with L&N's Cincinnati-New Orleans *Pan American* westbound and took a handoff from a *Pan American-Crescent* combo at Flomaton, Ala., eastbound. Few probably made the nocturnal west-to-northeast connection between trains traveling in opposite directions at that Alabama junction, but for me the flip-back possibility gleaned from the December 1967 *Official Guide* became the linchpin that made everything work.

Trains in transition

The *Crescent* was clearly in transition. Once one of Southern Railway's two premier New Orleans-New York trains operating on parallel routes south of Atlanta, by early 1968 the partnership that included the L&N, Western Railway of Alabama, and the Atlanta & West Point Rail Road began to fray after mail revenue started to dry up. The northbound *Crescent* swung through Mobile and Montgomery, Ala., on an earlier, longer schedule than the *Southerner*'s more direct, all-Southern routing through Birmingham, Ala.

Once a classy overnighter with separate dining and lounge cars, and no coaches between Charlotte and Atlanta (even though the northbound train de-



Southern Swing 1968

A Pullman porter stands still for the photographer during the *Gulf Wind's* Chattahoochee, Fla., stop, where L&N conductors and engineers took over from the SCL crews who brought the train from Jacksonville and Tallahassee.





At Flomaton, Ala., early on Feb. 2, 1968, Louisville & Nashville crews switch out Jacksonville-bound *Gulf Wind* cars from the combined *Pan American* and *Crescent*. The northbound train will then split at Montgomery, Ala., for Cincinnati and New York.





The *Crescent's* dining car, lettered WEST POINT ROUTE, encroaches on the Central of Georgia diamond at Opelika, Ala., while the northbound train does head end work on Feb. 2, 1968. Ordered as Atlanta & West Point's contribution to Southern's post-World War II *Crescent*, the diner would soldier on for Amtrak.

parted Atlanta around noon), the *Crescent* recently had been combined with the *Southerner* southbound. The *Crescent* I rode north from Flomaton to Atlanta would soon lose its New Orleans-New York sleeping car and New Orleans-Atlanta dining car. Even then, the diner didn't run through from Atlanta. A Southern car was added at Greenville, S.C., along with a pick-up sleeper to New York; both came down each morning on Southern's *Peach Queen*.

On the other hand, the early morning stop at Montgomery was especially eventful. The train separated from L&N's *Pan American* there; a Georgia Railroad Geep shuffled the head-end business first, then attended to the passenger cars where most everyone was still snoozing. The *Pan American* was set to depart 40 minutes before the *Crescent*, so there was plenty of time to record the early morning calm that had settled over the grand old station.

The train still did vital business at rural stops, too. Stepping off at Opelika, Ala., after breakfast in the diner, I witnessed a mortician unloading a casket from the baggage car. How many times did that happen here, or at other stations throughout the country before dwindling route options curtailed the practice almost entirely? The ritual took place while the train straddled Central of Georgia's diamond where the *City of Miami* and *Seminole* still crossed.

Leaving the *Crescent* for a brief Georgia stopover with high school friend Rick Burn, we watched Georgia Railroad mixed train depart Athens, Ga., for nearby Union Point, and then drove up to Spartanburg, S.C., to photograph the north- and southbound *Carolina Specials*, which met there. These had always been cross-current soldiers, running neither north-south nor east-west and once carrying through sleeping cars from Chicago over a challenging route, splitting at Asheville, N.C., to points east and south. Now it was too little, too late for these unique locals. After the Southern cut them back from Cincinnati to Oakdale, Tenn., by mid-1968 as part of the divide-and-conquer strategy railroads employed to get rid of trains, the dismembered leftovers succumbed entirely by the end of the year. Rick and I did, however, manage to catch the northbound *Crescent* just south of Clemson, S.C., on the way back to Georgia.

The next day after settling into a roomette on the same northbound train, I watched from a Dutch door as the



The Columbia-bound *Carolina Special*, left, meets its northbound counterpart on Feb. 3, 1968, at the Southern Railway's Spartanburg station.



The Pullman porter in charge of the New York pick-up sleeper watches the northbound *Crescent* arrive at Greenville, S.C., on Feb. 4, 1968. The sleeping car and a diner will be added here; they worked south on Southern's secondary *Peach Queen*, which set them out at Greenville.

Greenville sleeper and dining car were added, then visited the *Crescent Moon* lounge to absorb more onboard ambience. In the diner, I witnessed a young mother introduce her son to his first meal on a train.

But there was drama after dinner at Greensboro — an extended stop. I grabbed the tripod.

A southbound mail train was sitting across the platform. It wasn't in the timetable, so I thought here was another vanishing breed worthy of capturing on film. A conductor down the platform waved his lantern — the mail train's guy, right? After all, a vestibule door was open on a nearby *Crescent* coach and neither an onboard nor operating crew member was around to close it. Certainly, my train wasn't ready to leave . . .

Then the *Crescent* started to inch forward. What to do? Is it just positioning? What if . . . The train was still going slow enough, so I hastily snatched everything and hopped carefully on the nearby lower step in motion. Definitely a good decision, it turned out, because it was really rolling by the time we ran out of platform.

Lesson learned!

The road ahead

The question remained: How long would everything last? There was no way to envision the downward spiral would be halted with the creation of Amtrak three years later, but the cost was the loss of more than half the trains that had survived to that point.



Separate lanterns bob for a southbound Southern mail train, left, and the northbound *Crescent* sharing the platform on Feb. 4, 1968, at Greensboro, N.C., where the quest for this nocturnal time exposure almost caused the photographer to be left behind.

Nevertheless, it was impossible to predict that Florida East Coast rails would someday host hourly Brightline passenger trains (just not as far north as Daytona Beach). Or that a *Gulf Wind* descendant would roll again between Jacksonville and New Orleans as an extension of a the *Sunset Limited* after a 22-year Gulf Coast service gap, only to be suspended following a horrific hurricane 12 years after. Or that the *Southerner* would survive as a renamed *Southern Crescent* during years of continued Southern Railway operation, and then revert to the *Crescent* moniker when Amtrak finally took it over in 1979.

Ironically, W. Graham Clayton Jr. was Southern's president in 1968 during the *Southerner-Crescent* shell game and when the *Carolina Special* was sliced and diced. But becoming Amtrak's leader more than a decade later, it was he who fought to reverse cost-cutting and strived for quality on the national network. He apparently appreciated a good passenger train when he saw one. ■

BOB JOHNSTON has covered passenger rail operations for TRAINS since 1991. This is his sixth article in a CLASSIC TRAINS publication, starting in 2001.

The coal dock at Wanatah

A Pennsy fireman recalls the quirks of an Indiana steam-era landmark

Located some 51 miles east of Chicago Union Station, Wanatah, Ind., is not much more than a stop light at the intersection of U.S. 30 and U.S. 421.

Back in the steam era on the Pennsylvania Railroad, it was a busy place. In addition to the east and west mains, there were complimentary sidings. The eastbound siding was mainly used to get freight trains out of the way of numerous passenger trains of the time. The same thing applied to westbound traffic. Westbound freight also had the additional handicap of facing a lack of room in Chicago yards.

This picture, taken in 1949 from a tender in the eastbound siding at Wanatah, shows the coaling facility. The coal dock had long trestles, which local freights would shove loaded hoppers of coal. In turn, the hoppers were unloaded manually into small carts that were shoved into position on a truss bridge over the waiting tender.

Note the location of the water plugs. Some misguided genius placed them about six car-lengths from the coal dock. This necessitated a stop for water, then a short move up for coal. The resulting slack action frequently tested the strength of bolts holding down the stoves in cabin cars.

In the winter, Wanatah, located some 20 miles south of Lake Michigan, was in the middle of the snow belt. The flat prairie did nothing to slow down the cold, damp winds off the lake. The water plugs had pinhole leaks that sprayed over unlucky firemen. More than once, I have returned to the warmth of a locomotive cab with my outer clothing frozen stiff, so that it crackled as I walked! — John R. Crosby





Westbound Q-2 class 4-4-6-4 6198 takes coal and water at Wanatah, Ind., in March 1949. The trains are in the two sidings and the mains lie between. John R. Crosby

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The Way It Was

Honorary Steam Locomotive

A Penn Central RS3 acts like a coal-burner

The late George Hilton's famous suggestion that Alco's classic PA should be dubbed an "Honorary Steam Locomotive" was based on rail aficionados' admiration for the model's classic lines, not for its smoke displays when notching up. Alco's workaday RS3 could not boast such classic styling (although it wasn't bad), but I would nonetheless suggest that Penn Central No. 5509 should also be nominated for Honorary Steam Locomotive status, as illustrated by this 1973 photo.

In the 1970s, I was the PC passenger trainmaster at Harmon, N.Y. The majority of our commuter trains were comprised of third-rail M.U. cars, but the nonelectrified territory from Harmon to Poughkeepsie was covered by Budd RDCs in the off-peak, and by three through standard trains each way





The classic Alco PA, shown in D&H colors in January 1968 at Albany, N.Y., was nominated as an "Honorary Steam Locomotive" by the late author and historian George Hilton.

in the rush hour. The latter group was powered by pairs of ex-New Haven FL9s, eliminating the engine change previously required when E8s were used above Harmon and P2B electrics between there and Grand Central Terminal. A few P2Bs were still in service for Amtrak Hudson Line trains out of GCT. They were swapped for Amtrak E8s at Harmon.

On Aug. 23, 1973, the Grand Central trainmaster advised he had no FL9s for our Train 897 to Poughkeepsie, so it would be pulled by a P2B electric as far as Harmon. This meant that I had to come up with a diesel to get the consist to Poughkeepsie. I couldn't steal one of our Amtrak E8s, so the only alternative was

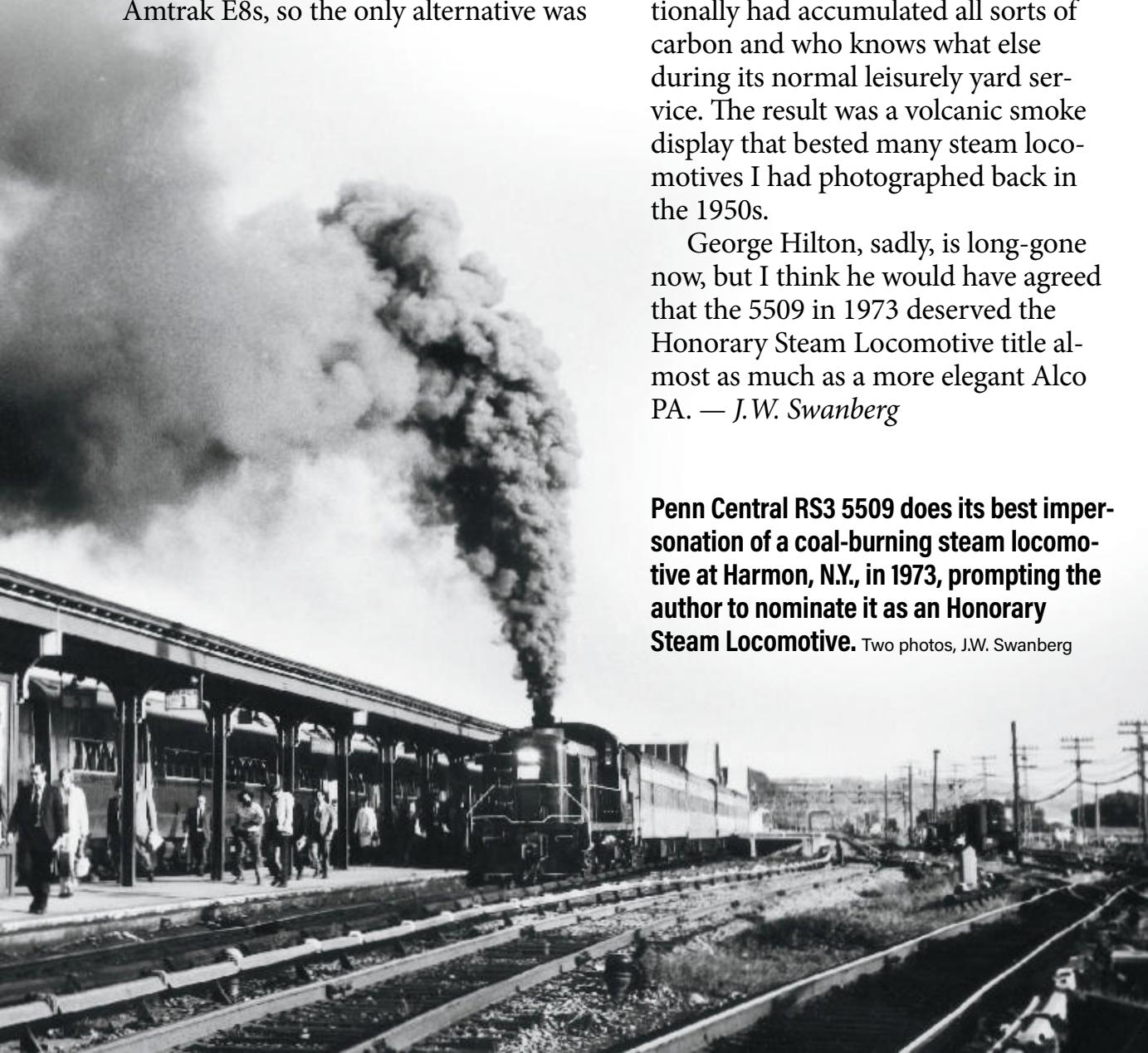
Alco RS3 No. 5509, which normally puttered sedately around the yard at Harmon as our shop switcher.

When 897 arrived at Harmon, we executed the power change as quickly as possible. Of course, this still involved a delay because changing engines was no longer allowed for in the timetable. Anxious to make up time, the 5509's engineer throttled right up to the eighth notch to get out of town.

Now, bear in mind that this locomotive probably hadn't seen this much work for weeks or months. Alco diesels were known for smoke when notching up due to turbo lag, but the 5509 additionally had accumulated all sorts of carbon and who knows what else during its normal leisurely yard service. The result was a volcanic smoke display that bested many steam locomotives I had photographed back in the 1950s.

George Hilton, sadly, is long-gone now, but I think he would have agreed that the 5509 in 1973 deserved the Honorary Steam Locomotive title almost as much as a more elegant Alco PA. — J.W. Swanberg

Penn Central RS3 5509 does its best impersonation of a coal-burning steam locomotive at Harmon, N.Y., in 1973, prompting the author to nominate it as an Honorary Steam Locomotive. Two photos, J.W. Swanberg



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Just one more move

Racing to get the job done results in a not-so-early quit for one locomotive crew



A chop-nose C&NW Geep moves a cut of cars in the 1980s beside the former National Avenue station in Milwaukee. Two photos, Brian Schmidt collection



An Alco switcher crosses the Milwaukee River south of downtown in summer 1964. Author Yanke worked a variety of jobs as a C&NW brakeman around Milwaukee in the 1960s.

In early 1965, I was working as a switchman in yard service for the Chicago & North Western. There was a lot of work on the railroads in those days. I had been working at yards in Butler, Milwaukee, Racine, and Kenosha, Wis. In addition to the regular flat switching in yards, there were many industries with spurs that needed service. Looking back in my time books, I see a lot of work on my assigned off days and many others where I worked a double shift.

On Feb. 9, I was called on my off day to work an extra job at National Avenue. Located on Milwaukee's near south side, the urban line ran under several bridges east of South First Street. The first supported the main line of the Milwaukee Road. The second and third bridges supported the main line and yard tracks of the C&NW's downtown Milwaukee-to-Chicago route.

Between the two C&NW bridges, there was a set of concrete steps that led up to the old depot and yard office. The former was then in use as a locker room and showers for the train and engine crews. The newer yard office was occupied by the yardmaster and several clerks who manned the IBM mainframe computers and handled the district switching and billing.

On the east side of the two buildings, there was the eastward main line and east of that was Marsh Yard with 15 tracks. On the west side was the westward main, the Fifth Ward lead, and a chemical plant spur. The Fifth Ward lead split into two tracks: one for a six-track yard and the other to a stub yard with some tracks going into industries. There was also a pair of tracks for servicing engines.

On this day at 4 p.m., we assembled in the old depot and put on our work shoes and winter clothing. Then we went over to the yard office and received our instructions from the yardmaster. Besides me there was Don, the foreman (conductor) of the crew; and Glen, the other switchman. Our extra job was put on just to serve the Afram Brothers scrap yard located on Water Street east of Marsh Yard.

We would deliver gondolas loaded with scrap metal into the yard and pick up the empties. The business had a boat coming to load with scrap and wanted all of its cars available for unloading. We were told by the yardmaster that when the scrap yard was filled and did not need another switch we were done. This was the incentive known as the "early quit." Get your work done, forget about going to lunch, and go home. Meanwhile, our engine crew with engineer Tony and fireman Tom pulled up along the depot on the Fifth Ward lead with a Fairbanks-Morse switch engine.

We grabbed our switch lists and got on the engine. We were going to cross over the mains and into the Marsh Yard for cars. Tony the engineer said the engine was low on water and he needed to fill it. Foreman Don, a gruff World War II Marine, told Tony we could make our first move and then get water. Tony said OK.

We gave a full switch to the Afram scrap yard. This all took time as the scrap business was down on street level and the cars in the Marsh Yard were on the elevation. All the cars had to be run around to complete the

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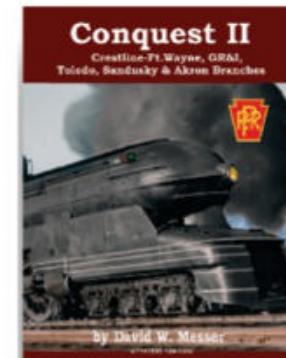
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The Way It Was Tales from railfans and railroaders



The station at National Avenue, seen in the late 1980s, was originally designated Allis. At right are the steps from ground level coming up to the platforms. Jim Yanke

switch each time.

During the evening, engineer Tony would say the engine was low on water and Don would keep saying just "one more move." This went on and on. Finally, the scrap yard was filled with enough cars for the night, and we were done.

We brought the engine back to the Fifth Ward lead. We got off and were going to tie up for the night, an hour early. The engine crew, Tony and Tom, would take the engine back down to the servicing track. Foreman Don looked up at engineer Tony and said, "I thought the engine was low on water. Did you forget you would need to put water in the engine?" Watering the engine would cut into the engine crew's early quit.

We were in the old depot changing clothes and washing up. Tony and Tom had gotten out the long water hose con-

nected to a faucet in the depot and had it lying across the westward main track while filling the tank on the engine. All of the sudden, an oscillating light brightened the yard. I think we all forgot about No. 125, a Chicago-to-Milwaukee passenger train, which was due by National Avenue at 11:07 p.m.

That train sliced right across the water hose.

After the train had passed, we were looking out the window and the looks on Tony and Tom's faces were so comical. We were laughing so hard.

End of story? Not quite. Just before we headed down the stairs to street level, we saw Tony and Tom taping the pieces of hose together with black tape. Not much of an "early quit" for them, but we had a good laugh for a long time.

— Jim Yanke ■



Train 160, looking like a typical North Western streamliner, races through Milwaukee at National Avenue in 1965, like train 125 in the story may have looked. Ed DeRouin, Jim Yanke collection

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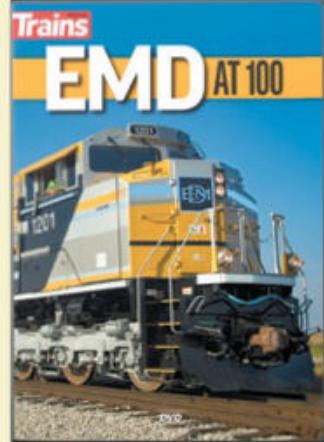
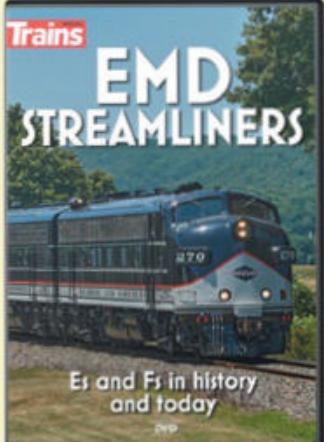


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Right: Car 419 is southbound on Jordan Street at Allen Street in Allentown on Nov. 11, 1951. It is an ex-Ohio Valley Electric car, an example of the 1938 modernization that LVT undertook buying relatively new secondhand lightweight cars. *Bottom right:* Car 908 is northbound on Second Street at Hamilton Street on Nov. 4, 1951. *Bottom center:* Cars 214 and 912 meet at Tilghman Siding in June 1949. The cars show how a new paint job can transform a car! *Bottom left:* Car 933, a 1919 Brill product, is eastbound on 780-foot Aineyville Bridge in June 1949. LVT was generally loyal to Philadelphia-based Brill for new equipment. The structure over Trout Creek carried both "Liberty Bell" interurbans and local service. *Clockwise from top,* Charlie Houser Sr.,

Charlie Houser Sr., George Krambles, George Krambles; all from Krambles-Peterson Archive





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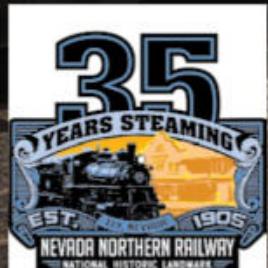
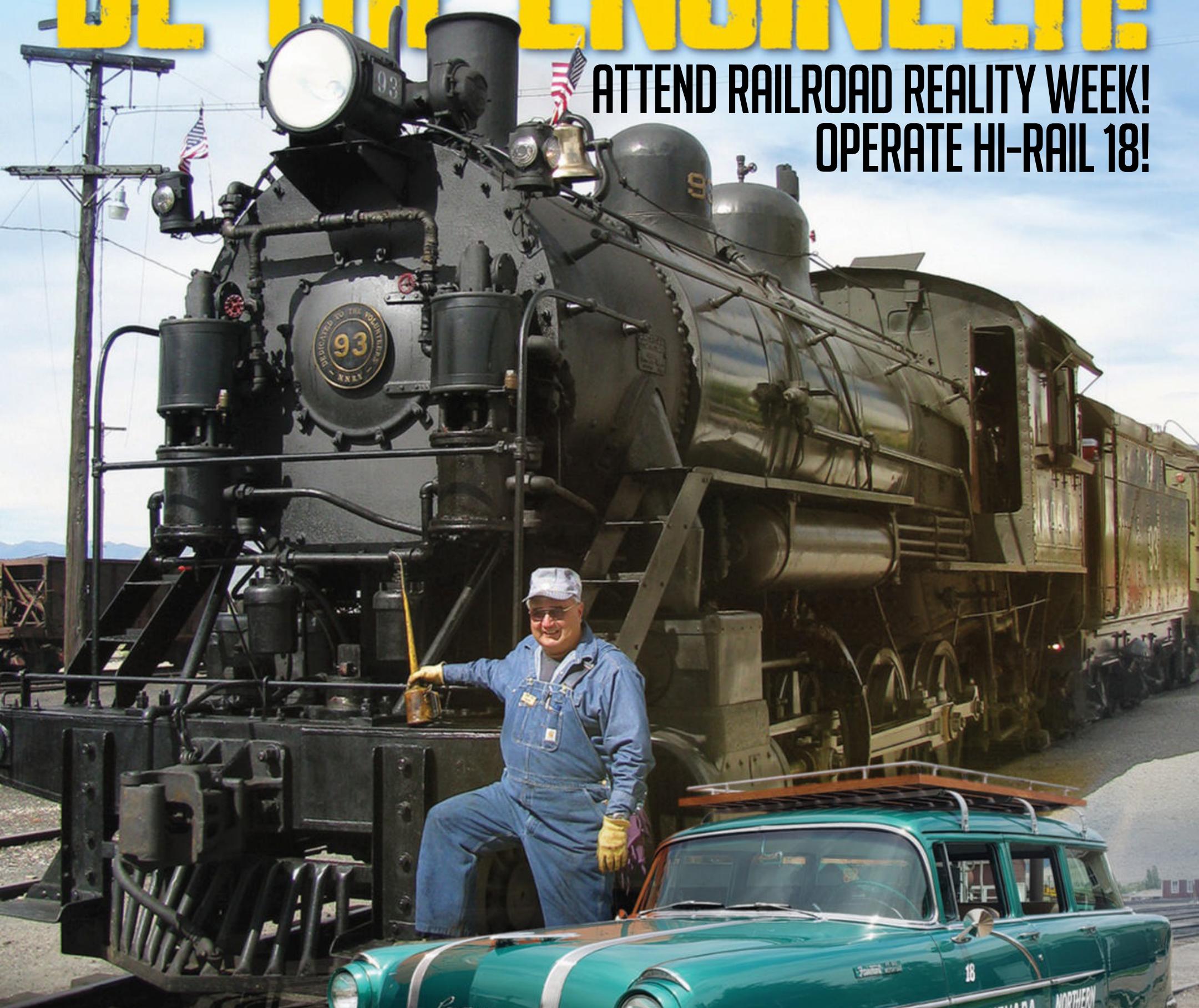
Toledo's glass edifice

Many of the beloved big-city terminals were built in the same era, leading to some design cues common among them. Toledo's 1950 Central Union Terminal stands out from those earlier prewar efforts, however. Recognizing Toledo's importance as the Glass City (and the companies themselves who are displayed at right in the inset photo), the station featured copious amounts of glass block along with light-colored brick and aluminum trim. Its predecessor, built in 1886 and suffering a major fire in 1930, was plagued by the need for patrons to cross tracks at grade. To rectify this, the new terminal had a grand concourse over three curved island platforms and eight tracks

(the ninth just off the end). Other passenger amenities included a soda fountain, barbershop, and restaurant. For company service, the station had room for offices, police, and crew quarters via an attached railroad YMCA. When patrons of owner New York Central and tenants Baltimore & Ohio, Chesapeake & Ohio, and Wabash approached the station, they surely would recognize it as a product of their midcentury society, and, hopefully, Toledo's industrial legacy. Perhaps when civic cheerleader Corporal Maxwell Klinger (played by Toledo native Jamie Farr) returned from Korea at the end of "M*A*S*H" he passed through here, too. Two photos, New York Central

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